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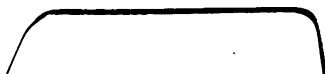
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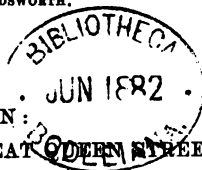
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NOBLE INFLUENCE,
AND
HOW TO OBTAIN IT.

A Manual for Young Men.

BY
JAMES COPNER, M.A.
VICAR OF ELSTOW.

I would arouse the sensual from their sleep
Of death, and win the vacant and the vain
To noble raptures.—WORDSWORTH.



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TO
SAMUEL WHITBREAD, Esq., M.P.
OF SOUTHILL PARK, BEDFORDSHIRE,
OF WHOSE MUNIFICENCE
THE RESTORED CHURCH OF ELSTOW
WILL BE A LASTING MONUMENT,
THESE PAGES ARE INSCRIBED,
WITH FEELINGS OF SINCERE ESTEEM.



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PREFACE.

THIS little book, whatever may be its faults and shortcomings, has at any rate the virtue of good intentions ; for its purpose in the main is no other than this—to put profitable thoughts into its readers' heads, to point out to them how success in life is most likely to be secured, to indicate to them why it should be sought after, and the sort of self-training they should adopt if they would exercise as they ought, according to their opportunities, a NOBLE INFLUENCE in the world. Hence the title which has been given to this volume. I trust that to young men, and to those interested in their welfare, it may prove acceptable.



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NOBLE INFLUENCE.



CHAPTER I

SUCCESS : ITS HELPS AND HINDRANCES.

ONE great object which almost all men have in view, when they first enter upon the duties of their various callings or professions, is to better their condition in the world. Hence men who have gone to their graves without either riches or promotion are frequently spoken of as "men who have failed." And yet, in truth, they may not have failed at all; for whether a man has failed or not depends entirely upon what he has been aiming at. If, during a life of laborious drudgery, his sole object has been to get worldly wealth, then, of course, if at last he never gets it, he may fairly be said to have failed. If, however, worldly wealth has not been his end, but has only been sought after, so far as it has been sought after at all, as a means to higher ends, then, provided he attains such higher ends, he cannot justly be said to have failed, even though he should have acquired no worldly prosperity whatever.

Faraday died a poor man, and yet who would say that he was a man who failed? Had he made wealth his end, he could have got it. He could

easily have obtained five thousand a-year by his professional work ; but his object was to benefit mankind by the advancement of science. If he effected this object, as it must be confessed he did, then, although he gained but little wealth, he was, nevertheless, pre-eminently successful.

So, again, with Richard Cobden. He was more than once on the verge of ruin, and died in the possession of but a humble competency. Nevertheless, that he signally fulfilled the main purposes of his life who can for a moment question ?

Not a few of the Reformers, again, of the sixteenth century were deprived not only of their wealth, but of their very lives. Were they, therefore, unsuccessful ? I trow not. The religious liberties we now enjoy bear witness that their efforts prospered.

No man can be truly said to have failed who has contributed in any material degree towards accomplishing the objects he has aimed at, even though in doing so he should have lost everything. Thus many a martyr should be viewed as a successful man.

They who worship success
Follow no blind guide ;
Distrusting themselves, they leave
The universe to decide.
Only to learn aright
Who does or does not succeed,
They must keep right ends in sight,—
A difficult matter indeed.

Yes, that is, indeed, the difficulty. It is because men lose sight of "right ends," and convert into ends what should solely be regarded as means, that they accomplish so little in the world,—so

little, I mean, that is deserving of the gratitude or admiration of their fellow-men. A man's conduct is noble only in proportion as it is the outcome of a noble mind, and his success, no matter how little or great, is noble only in proportion as it is secured by noble endeavours for the attainment of noble ends.

But what are noble ends? Is getting money a noble end? No, as an end in itself it is not noble at all,—quite the very reverse. We should hardly think so, however, if we were to judge only by the kind of advice which well-meaning parents sometimes bestow upon their sons, and by the kind of instruction which is imparted to young men in some of the popular manuals intended especially for their use. In short, what is continually presented to them as the grand object of their existence is no other than mere vulgar money-getting. I do not at all mean to say that they are recommended to aim at such money-getting by improper methods. I do not, even in the least degree, insinuate that the advice which parents usually give their sons, and the instruction with which popular books for young men supply their readers, belong to the same category as the counsel of the sharper,—

Rem facias, rem,

Si possis, recte; si non, quocunque modo rem;

which means, being interpreted, "Make money honestly if you can, but if you cannot make it honestly make it anyhow. Whatever you do, make money!" Such a maxim is instinctively perceived to be infamous. The man who could seriously commend it to anybody as containing sagacious admonition would, by so doing, be simply

proclaiming himself a rogue, and the man who could act upon it would be a rogue likewise. It could be advanced in no moral book, could be advocated by no honest father, and could be carried into practice by no deserving son. It bears iniquity on the face of it, and is recognised at once as comprising the policy of a knave. Undoubtedly, wealth and promotion, regarded as means for the attainment of higher ends, are very proper objects of ambition, but no worthy man would advocate their acquisition at the cost of integrity. He would say to any young man in whose welfare he was interested, "Try to get 'rem recte,' if you please; but, if you are unable to get it 'recte,' you had better not get it at all."

Books written to instruct young men how to act in order to succeed in life usually impart much the same sort of advice. The burden of their admonitions is, "*Facias rem si possis*" (Get on in the world if you can); but, remember, you must do it "*recte*,"—honestly, honourably,—not "*quocunque modo*." Immoral practices, they neglect not to show, lead oftener to failure than success; that success, if got by them, is not worth the having; and that therefore it should be sought for only by legitimate and worthy means.

But what are "legitimate and worthy means"? Why, very ordinary means indeed. THRIFT is one of them, and INDUSTRY is another. Hundreds and thousands, as everybody knows, have got on by thrift and industry. People, of course, are in no want of proof concerning a fact so evident, and yet, absurdly enough, as if the young men of England were devoid of common intelligence,

the writers of good little books intended for their edification sometimes appear to consider it incumbent upon them to fortify such a simple truism as the above by the testimony of a host of witnesses; bringing forward case after case of merchants, lawyers, shopmen, doctors, farmers, and no end of others, to establish a point which nobody in his senses would question for a single moment. Why it would be about as reasonable in a popular manual of astronomy to produce instance after instance of men having seen the sun, to demonstrate that the sun exists, as it is to bring forward example after example of men having succeeded by thrift and industry, to prove—what nobody disputes—that thrift and industry are conducive to success. Of course, they are, and that is all that need be said about them.

Another means recommended to young men, with a view to their attaining worldly success, is TO MAKE FRIENDS. Every one knows that having influential friends at hand to give him a lift is often, to a man who has an eye to preferment, of very material advantage. Hence young men have frequently been counselled to win friends in order to increase their chances of advancement. But is such advice good? Certainly it is very suitable advice to proceed from the lips of some Mr. Worldly Wiseman; but it is advice, nevertheless, of a very low and mundane sort. It is entirely “of the earth earthy,” prostituting friendship to the objects of filthy lucre, and destroying its beauty altogether. What! Is a man to look out for friends solely in order to convert them into tools, to use them as stepping-stones, to make them, as it were, so many rungs in a ladder up

which he may climb to fortune? Surely not. Surely friendships should be formed from better motives than this. Yes; a man who in selecting his associates is actuated by purely mercenary considerations is a man whose intimacy they were better without. He is a hypocrite in the matter, the player of a part, and one to whom, if they knew the disingenuous motives that prompted him to court their intimacy, they would most certainly decline to extend the right hand of fellowship. No; let not young men be taught that they should seek their friends merely for what they can get by them. Let not such a miserably selfish doctrine be instilled into their minds. It is demoralising in a high degree, and is antagonistic altogether to that spirit of honesty and independence which characterises men of worth.

Do I, then, despise friendship? No; quite the very reverse. I value it as one of the greatest of blessings. Indeed, I go so far as to say, with Lord Bacon, that to a man destitute of friends the world is a wilderness; and I would endorse to the full the dictum of Cicero, that to deprive life of friendship is to deprive the world of its sunshine. If, however, a man really deserves to have friends, the chances are that he will not be long without them, since it is almost as much a matter of necessity that a kindly, genial, benevolent, sociably-disposed person should have friends as that a magnet should attract iron. He simply acts as his good nature prompts him, and his friends come.

But friends differ in their friendliness. True, they do. Some, whom we familiarly speak of as our friends, are friends indeed; others are friends but in name only. Some know and sympathise

with our most private opinions, whereas from others the secret thoughts of our hearts are an absolutely sealed book. In short, whilst some of our friends know us,—so to put it,—both inside and out, others know but little more of us than our external features. Really intimate friends are those, and those only,—generally speaking, in a similar station of life,—who are drawn towards one another by such spontaneous sympathy that they feel in each other's welfare and prosperity almost a personal concern. Fair-weather friends will leave us when storms come; but our real friends will not only share our gladness when all is bright, but will stand by us, shoulder to shoulder, when all is dark and beclouded. Truly, then, as is said by the wise son of Sirach, "A faithful friend is a strong defence, and he who hath found such an one hath found a treasure."

Having THRIFT, INDUSTRY, and FRIENDS, what more does a man require to ensure his making his way successfully in the world? Well; he requires HEALTH, of course, and he requires also GOOD SENSE and a GOOD CHARACTER. If he does not possess these two last-mentioned requirements, at least in an average degree, small are his chances of winning worldly success at all. CIRCUMSTANCES, too, count for much. A man of intelligence with circumstances on his side is like a ship at sea with the wind and tide in her favour. He can hardly fail, if he steers by the compass of common sense, and keeps a firm hold on the rudder of integrity, to guide himself safely into the coveted harbour of promotion. It is not so, however, with men in general. The majority of them, if they have the credit of being men of

probity, and act with a tolerable amount of ability, may hold their own in life and be respected, but must be content to remain in comparative obscurity in the social conditions in which they were born and nurtured. Such is the lot of ordinary mortals ; and such is the lot, too, of hundreds who, both in goodness and intelligence, are vastly superior to the rest. Whatever popular books for young men may imply to the contrary, luring on, as it were, with phantom lights unwary pilgrims, it is, nevertheless, a most undeniable, a most palpably manifest truth, that it is the few only, the very few, who can rise to eminence, and those few by no means invariably the best and most moral of their race. Indeed, as history abundantly proves, the worst and most unscrupulous of men have often been the favourites of fortune. But honest men need not envy them. Worldly success, so far as it is acquired at the cost of integrity, is surely a success to be despised. Let a man gain it honourably, or not care to gain it at all.

I have instanced a few HELPS to its attainment. I will next mention a few of the HINDRANCES which stand in its way. Want of sufficient intelligence is, of course, a fatal defect, and so, while it lasts, is want of health. But of all impediments which it is in a man's own power to cure, if he will, INDOLENCE is the chief. Genius has been defined as "an infinite capacity for taking trouble." Whether or not this account of it is correct may, of course, be questioned. There can be no doubt, however, that, as a fact, so-called men of genius have usually been men of industry, or at least that, whatever celebrity they have attained, they

have reached in general by earnest work. Byron may have been a voluptuary, or he may not, but assuredly he could never have written "Childe Harold" or the "Corsair" had he been a lazy drone. Livingstone won an imperishable renown, but he won it by prodigious labours. So with Demosthenes the orator ; so with Lord Brougham, who claimed for himself the title of "a working man" ; and so too, to take a living example, with Froude the historian. "My history of England," he is reported to have said in an address delivered at New York, "my history of England has been composed from perhaps two hundred thousand documents, nine-tenths of them in difficult manuscript and in half-a-dozen languages. I have been unable to trust printed copies, for the manuscripts often tell stories which the printed versions leave concealed. I have been unable to trust copyists ; I have read everything myself. I have made my own extracts from papers which I might never see a second time. I have had to condense pages into single sentences, to translate and analyse ; and I have had afterwards to depend entirely on my own transcripts. Under such conditions, it is impossible for me to affirm that no reference has been misplaced, and no inverted commas fallen to wrong words. I have done my best to be exact, and no writer can undertake more."

Such examples, of course, might be multiplied indefinitely, but there is no need here to instance more. Suffice it to say that they all point to one and the same conclusion, namely, this, that noble success is to be won only by noble efforts ; that genius can do little without them, and mediocrity nothing, nothing worth speaking of at all.

Yes ; it is only by putting forth their energies, and by doing with their might what has come to their hands to do, that the world's most applauded benefactors have won their well-merited honours. Whilst others were dreaming, they were vigorously employed. This is certainly not the only difference between them and ordinary men, but it is at least a condition on which their achievements have depended.

The heights by great men reach'd and kept
Were not attain'd by sudden flight;
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upwards in the night.

Those who would rival their success must be prepared to emulate their labours.

To catch Dame Fortune's golden smile
Assiduous wait upon her,
And gather gear by every wile
That's justified by honour :
Not for to hide it in a hedge,
Not for a train attendant,
But for the glorious privilege
Of being independent.

And, I would add, for the still greater privilege of being able to be of some use in your generation, and of exerting, according to your humble powers, a noble influence in the world.

As a moral duty, indolence should be resisted. It is a dead weight to a man : it pulls him back : it obstructs him sadly in the race of life : it prevents him from doing himself justice : it hinders him from progressing as he ought. He should, therefore, resolve to overcome it.

Another impediment to success is PRIDE ; not,

of course, that reasonable pride, that proper self-respect which every man should have, and which will preserve him from being guilty of any mean and unworthy conduct; but that cold and unsympathising haughtiness of temper which so inflates him with the notion of his own importance that he behaves repulsively to others, and makes more foes than friends. Such a disposition is not only a fatal obstacle to advancement, but a source, moreover, of perpetual annoyance. None are more liable to mortifications than those who are too high and mighty. Hence the wholesome advice which Mather, of Boston, once gave to Benjamin Franklin when a young man. Franklin was leaving the doctor's library by an ill-lighted, narrow passage, and not perceiving in his hurry that there was a beam projecting from the roof, which he might easily have avoided by bending down, he ran his head lucklessly against it. "Ah, my young friend," cried Mather, "so you were holding your head too high, were you? Well, take care as you go through the world to hold it lower, or you will get many an unwelcome bump." This salutary admonition Franklin ever afterwards remembered. He walked through life in the way of humility, and it proved to him a road to honour.

Another impediment to success, and a great one too, is PROCRASTINATION, putting off doing what ought to be done until, perhaps, one is just in time to be too late for some favourable opportunity. Missing a railway-train, for example, may lose a man a valuable appointment, and change the whole bent of his career. The chance he had hoped for slips from his grasp, and his prospects are blasted irretrievably. Who has not known

some such cases as this? A little less procrastination, and all would have been right. The moral is obvious: set sail while the breezes are propitious; do not keep your bark at anchor when the rising waters should be bearing you onwards. Familiar to us as household words, but by no means as well remembered as familiar, is the quotation from our great poet,—

There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

Another impediment to success is NIGGARDLINESS. Thrift, of course, is to be commended, and if a man in needy circumstances does not practise it he will speedily come to destitution. Indeed, to get rid of poverty is a first and most essential preliminary to prosperity. A man is kept down by it immensely. Thus Dr. Johnson exclaims sorrowfully from his own bitter experience,—

This mournful truth is everywhere confess'd,
Slow rises worth by poverty oppress'd.

Old Juvenal before him had uttered the same sentiment,—

Hand facile emergunt quorum virtutibus obstat
Res angusta domi.

But to be prudently economical is one thing, to be niggardly is another. The former is praiseworthy, the latter is detestable; nay, more,—it is

calculated to defeat rather than promote the object which it aims at. People lose by niggardliness much more than they ever gain by it, frequently in pocket, and always in the world's esteem. Thus it has often been remarked that "generosity pays." "I have always observed," says Sir Arthur Helps in his "Thoughts on Government," "that occasional acts of extreme generosity on the part of an employer have an almost disproportionate effect in inducing men to seek for work under that man, and that, to express the matter vulgarly, nothing 'pays' better than these occasional acts of generosity." Similarly, it is said in a venerable book which expresses compendiously the observation of ages, "The liberal soul shall be made fat;" "He that watereth shall be watered also himself;" "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty."

Experience in our own days fully substantiates all this. Those who are open-handed in promoting useful movements for the public benefit, often increase greatly their influence, their popularity, and even their pecuniary welfare, by so doing. Thus old Bunyan tells us in his homely way,—

A man there was, though some did count him mad,
The more he gave away the more he had.

People, however, should be liberal according to their ability, not merely because it "pays,"—indeed, excepting the satisfaction which the consciousness of having acted rightly imparts to the mind, it sometimes does not pay at all,—but simply because to be liberal is what their own moral sense tells them they ought to be. Gain

may come from liberality, and does come from it, but it is not with a view to gain that they should practise it. Indeed, if generosity, so to call it, springs from sordid motives, it is merely a counterfeit, and not the genuine thing. The principal motive that should prompt it is the motive of doing good. But here a caution is needed, for the motive of doing good, if injudiciously acted upon, may positively lead to evil. It is one of the very best of motives, but, nevertheless, like all other motives, should be subjected to the control of discretion. It is undeniable, for example, as has been shown by political economists, that indiscriminate almsgiving is harmful; that it does, and always has done, a great deal of mischief in the world; that it encourages hypocrisy and deceit, and has often actually done more to perpetuate and intensify human woes than to eradicate and cure them. Indeed, I am convinced that more poverty is due to it than prosperity, and servility more than independence. There are, however, modes enough of being wisely liberal,—movements and institutions and worthy men enough deserving of considerate assistance,—and no one, surely, need go far out of his way to find them.

Another impediment to success is, to use a familiar expression, **HAVING TOO MANY IRONS IN THE FIRE.**

The man who seeks one thing in life, and but one,
May hope to achieve it before life is done;
But he who seeks all things wherever he goes,
Only reaps from the hopes which around him he sows—
A harvest of barren regrets.

In short, it is evident that a man who fritters away on a dozen objects efforts which should be

concentrated on one, is not the most likely man to accomplish in his day and generation any work of paramount importance. This truth is one which might be reflected upon with advantage by some busy people amongst us, who, Sisyphus-like, are going through infinite toils, and yet performing nothing—nothing in any degree proportionate to the labours they expend. *Multa agendo nihil agunt*, and all because, having more ends in view than they can pursue effectively, they attain to proficiency in no single thing. Their lives, of course, are unspeakably better and happier than those of the idle. They do not, however, do themselves justice. They undertake too many employments, too many duties, too many studies, thoroughly to master any. They approach, perhaps, the goal of excellence in this direction or that, but after all never reach it, never become first-rate actors on the stage of life.

Indeed, there are many who from this cause seem destined through their whole existence to play the part of second fiddles. When schoolboys, they do not win the prizes of their form nor attain to the headship of their school. At college, too, they are lag-behinds; and in their career afterwards, although they may be fairly well versed in a number of departments of knowledge, and although in some of them they may reach a degree of considerable excellence, yet never attain to pre-eminent proficiency in any;

But, like the hindmost chariot-wheels, are curst
Still to be near, but ne'er to be the first.

MARRIAGE is sometimes spoken of as a bar to success. Thus Lord Bacon says in his Essays,

"He that hath a wife and children hath given hostages to fortune ; for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the best works, and of greatest merit to the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men, which, both in affection and means, have married and endowed the public."

If, however, Bacon preached celibacy, he undoubtedly did not practise it ; for, at the mature age of forty, he took it into his head to marry the daughter of a wealthy alderman, and obtained by doing so a considerable addition to his means, and, since he rose after that to the dignity of Lord Chancellor, it cannot surely be said that his marriage was any great obstacle to his advancement. However, it must fairly be borne in mind that he was blessed with no "olive branches" round about his table.

Certainly, many men distinguished in science and philosophy,—Newton, Locke, Galileo, and a host of others,—have lived and died bachelors. Whether or not they would have accomplished, had they married, the achievements that they did, may very reasonably be disputed. Whatever, however, may be advisable in the case of exceptional men, there can be no doubt at all that for men in general marriage is the proper condition. Dr. Johnson says, "Marriage is the best state for men in general, and every man is a worse man in proportion as he is unfit for the married state." Whether the latter assertion here made is fully borne out by facts or not, I leave others to decide, but I have no doubt whatever about the truth of the former,—provided it is understood only to recommend marriage when it is entered upon with

due discretion. This is an important point, but by no means sufficiently attended to. Hence hundreds of ill-assorted unions—clever men tied up for life to fools of women, and clever women to fools of men. What can possibly be more incongruous? Let sensible men look out for women with well-furnished minds for their wives, and they will enter upon marriage wisely.

BAD MANNERS are undoubtedly an impediment to success, and under this head I would comprise all breaches of correct taste in dress and general demeanour.

That a pleasing countenance is often a great recommendation to a man it is impossible to deny. I know the case of an eminent philologist who lost a lucrative post mainly owing to the meanness of his personal appearance. Had he only been good-looking, he would have secured, I believe, to a certainty, the appointment he was seeking. However, be that as it may, the insignificance of his presence was no fault of his. He could not add a cubit to his stature, nor make himself this when nature had made him that.

That a man's success often depends much upon his appearance there can be no doubt; and that what his appearance may be is partly dependent on his clothes no one, I suppose, will dispute. Hence it follows that a man's *dress* may often have more to do than some people would willingly believe with the slowness or rapidity of his rate of promotion. Certainly it has something to do with his reception in society. Dress, therefore, though a little matter, is unquestionably one to which some attention should be paid.

And the same may be said of *good manners*. ~~It~~

short, a man who, "inside and outside, to his heart's core and to his fingers' ends," is a gentleman, has a decided advantage over one who is not. Respecting properly himself, and those he is concerned with, he receives from them such deference as is due to him, commends himself to their confidence, and gains their favour.

Even the veriest scamps, swell-mobsmen, and swindlers owe their success greatly to their manners. Thus with the libertine of the poet—

His whole address held off suspicion.
Proud with the proud, yet courteously proud,
So as to make them feel he knew his station
And—theirs; without a struggle for priority,
He neither brooked nor claimed superiority.

Men regret their failures and mistakes, and naturally so; and yet, after all, their greatest successes are often to be traced to them. Thus it was with Byron. The severe criticisms of his reviewers spurred him on to further efforts. "His pride," says Moore, "had been wounded to the quick, and his ambition humbled; but this feeling of humiliation lasted but for a moment. The very reaction of his spirit against aggression roused him to a full consciousness of his powers." Thus it is with every man who has any "go" in him at all. Paley's case was similar. Being taunted with his mathematical deficiencies, he was put upon his mettle, and came out senior wrangler.

Having now reviewed a few of the Helps and Hindrances to Worldly Success, which should never be pursued, be it borne in mind, as an end in itself, but only as a means to higher ends, as

will be explained more fully in the sequel, I will wind up this chapter with a story. Commonplace though it may be, it conveys a very wholesome moral, which average people will do well to remember, and those whose talents are transcendent will be unwise to disregard. If any one were asked which were the swifter travellers, pigs or turkeys, of course he would answer, turkeys. But the swiftest travellers are by no means always the surest. A pig-drover once made a bet with a farmer who dealt in turkeys that he would drive home from a town in the Midlands a drove of twenty pigs in a shorter space of time than the farmer would drive home a flock of twenty turkeys. The start, it was arranged, should come off one afternoon in the market-place, and a ludicrous sight it was—the pig-drover whipping on his stubborn grunTERS, and the farmer, confident of success, driving before him his flock of turkeys. The turkeys, it need scarcely be observed, soon left the grunTERS in the lurch, and were making their distance from them increasingly greater as they sped along. But now for the reverse of the picture. Nightfall came, and with that the farmer's troubles. His road happening to lie through an extensive plantation, the wearied turkeys, urged by an irresistible impulse of their nature, betook themselves off to roost. One after another they flapped up into the nearest trees, and as fast as the farmer got down one of them on this side of the way up perched another on the other. As time went on his difficulties doubled, and at length his turkeys were hopelessly dispersed. With sticks and stones did he endeavour to get them into marching order ; but all to no

purpose. The more he worried them the worse his prospects became. At last he got exhausted by his efforts, and sat down moodily by the roadside, ruminating over his ill-fortune, and wishing all sorts of misadventures to the drover of the pigs.

But the pigs, during all this time, were steadily plodding onwards. Slowly but surely did they grunt along, and, ere the farmer had got down his turkeys from the trees, had reached their final destination.

So it is in human life. The plodding in the long run often get far ahead of those of more shining parts.

He that would win the race must guide his horse
Obedient to the customs of the course ;
Else, though unequalled to the goal he flies,
A meaner than himself shall gain the prize.

CHAPTER II.

TRUE GREATNESS.

MEN want to be great, and vainly imagine that if they obtain wealth and a certain social position they will become so. They mistake altogether what greatness is. Nothing makes a man truly great but his own character. A mean-spirited, narrow-minded, selfish man could no more be made great by wealth and a higher position in society than a cadger could be converted into a gentleman by donning fine clothes. Greatness, so to call it, which consists in externals, is no true greatness at all. A man may be looked up to, flattered, and belauded, but for all that may be supremely contemptible.

Wealth and a dignified position in society are, in general, rated too highly. However, it is equally unreasonable to estimate them below their worth. Honest John Bunyan was hardly wise, and was certainly uncivil, when he bluntly replied to a London merchant who offered him a lucrative appointment for his son, "God did not send me to advance my family, but to preach the Gospel!"

By all means let wealth and dignity of social position have their due. Let it be ungrudgingly confessed that they are things which may honour-

ably be sought after. At the same time, let it clearly be perceived that they do not constitute any real greatness in the man who has them. It is, no doubt, very common for people in their ordinary talk to speak of a man who owns an extensive estate, a large household, and a grand mansion, as being a great man. But surely, if we consider precisely what is implied by such language, we shall very easily apprehend that, when people say, in a lax, conventional sort of way, that such or such a commonplace man in their neighbourhood is a great man, what they really mean is that his wealth is great, that his position is great, that his acres are great, but not at all necessarily that there is any greatness whatever in himself.

Real greatness—greatness of character—no one, of course, can suppose to consist in a man's outward circumstances, be they what they may, but simply and solely in what he is in himself.

But how are we to know what a man is in himself? Why, to know thoroughly and precisely what he is in himself—what he is in his heart of hearts—is undoubtedly impossible. Nevertheless, it is quite within the compass of our power to know very much of what he is by observing his external actions. If we could know fully the character of his actions, we should know fully the character of the man. This, however, is impossible, since he may perform apparently good actions from motives which, if we knew them, would vitiate them in our estimation altogether. Still, for all that, his external actions are the only means by which we can judge of him; and, on the whole, we may fairly assume that they indicate

with tolerable correctness what sort of a man he is. If his actions are apparently noble—apparently such as would result from noble motives—the chances are that he is of noble character himself; and if he does such actions frequently and habitually, and not occasionally only, we can have no doubt about the matter at all. Thus his external actions, taken in the mass, may be viewed as a very good indication of what he is in himself. Let his actions be such as to mark him out as being pre-eminently intelligent, and brave, and true, and high-minded, and we should respect him accordingly. However humble his condition in the world might be, he would, in all probability, have a soul within him that was noble.

Great men are simply men who, in some form or another, can do great things—things which the run of men are incapable of doing, at least with equal excellence. And noble-minded men—great men belonging to a higher order of worth—are those who are capable of performing actions which are finely and exceptionally noble. In the number of the former—and of course some of them will be found in the number of the latter as well—are great scholars, great orators, great poets, great sculptors, great painters, great merchants, great astronomers, great actors, and even great cricketers and oarsmen, and distinguished men of a variety of other descriptions. In the number of the latter are philanthropists, who have done great things for the cause of humanity; patriots, actuated by a burning zeal, who have done great things for the honour and welfare of their country; and martyrs, and confessors, and reformers, who have had the rare courage, with the world against them,

to stand up for truth and liberty. Such men are nobly great, splendidly unselfish, and merit the admiration of mankind.

However, whatever be the kind of greatness a man achieves, it arises entirely from what he is in himself, and not from his outward surroundings; and when we say that we recognise his greatness, what we usually mean is, that we recognise him as being a man who has performed something or another, no matter what, with pre-eminent zeal or ability. Mere commonplace actors on the world's stage, even though they be princes, prelates, or prime ministers,* have nothing great in them at all.

If a man is really great in any way whatever, his greatness, such as it is, will probably become known in the social circle he belongs to; and the chances are, if his excellence is in any way remarkable, that, sooner or later, his merits will be more widely appreciated. The poet says,—

Full many a gem, of purest ray serene,
The dark, unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Pleasing lines, undoubtedly. As to the existence, however, in real life of many such unrecognised gems I must confess myself extremely sceptical. I believe that human flowers born to blush unseen and waste their fragrance on the desert air are very few indeed. I know of no village Hampdens lurking in out-of-the-way corners; no mute, in-

* "The Queen may make a Prime Minister, but it is not in Royalty to make a Statesman."—THE RIGHT HON. JOHN BRIGHT, M.P.

glorious Miltons; no unheard-of but could-be Cromwells. I hold, on the contrary, that, if men have any real greatness in them at all, in all likelihood it will show itself. Force of character is not so concealable, so repressible, so utterly extinguishable an article as the poet makes it. If not in this form, at any rate in that, it pretty generally comes forth to light as occurring circumstances may determine.

Greatness—meaning thereby greatness of mind or character—cannot, it is plain, be estimated by the wealth or position in society that a man has been born to, since it has been wholly inherited, and has not been due to any exertions of his own at all. Nor, again, is it to be measured—except partially, and then only in certain particular cases—by such worldly prosperity as he may have acquired solely by his personal endeavours. It is true that great worldly prosperity may often be a direct consequence of greatness of character; but it is true also that great worldly adversity may equally result from it. For example, worldly success may be a direct result of the distinguished ability and integrity of a great merchant; but, on the other hand, the loss of all things will be the portion of a suffering martyr. Of the two men we should probably say that the persecuted martyr was the greater. But not necessarily so; for whether a man is really great or not in the eyes of reasonable men depends entirely on their opinion of what he is in himself. If they regard him as sacrificing himself nobly in a grand cause, they will at once characterise him as noble; but, if they look upon him as a silly crack-brained enthusiast, who, had he been born a Hindoo,

would have flung himself madly beneath the car of Juggernaut, they will only wonder at his credulity and despise his folly.

Those whose revered names stand out as landmarks on the chart of human history ; who have exercised by their intelligence a far-reaching influence over the destinies of men ; who in science and literature have towered conspicuously above their fellows ; or who, as reformers, have moved the world, and set it rolling, so to speak, in a higher orbit, are few indeed—so few that we might almost count them upon our fingers. Hardly any of them became rich, and the greatest of them all was poor—so poor that it is said of Him, that whilst the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, He had not where to lay His homeless head. In what did His greatness consist ? Not, of course, in his visible surroundings, for there was nothing great in them at all. No, it consisted—the greatness of every truly great man consists, as has been already seen—solely and entirely in himself. It arose from what He was within, not from anything without Him. As flowing waters point us to their source, as the daylight implies the existence of the sun, as the buds bursting in the spring-time prove creation to be instinct with life, so does the immaculate perfection which characterised the humanity of Christ proclaim His intrinsic divinity. He was grandly good, surpassingly benevolent, and sublime for his world-wide sympathy. He welcomed children, delighted in seeing people happy, and was present at the festivities of a wedding. He pitied, too, the suffering, felt for the sorrowing, and consoled the

dying. He revealed to us God as OUR FATHER, deserving the homage of our hearts, and not as a being whom we should tremble to approach. Thus, Mr. Griffith says, in his remarkable work, *The Gospel of the Divine Life*,—"The religion infused into us by the spirit of Jesus is one not of slavish dread and unmanly prostration before the terrible forces of the universe, but of exulting recognition amidst all these forces, in all their magnitude, of the Father's hand directing and controlling them, the Father's heart employing them for His people's good."

But of all the factors which make up in combination the glorious personality of Christ none reveals itself to us more conspicuously, in studying the brief records which we have of His history, than His heroic spirit of philanthropy. He sacrificed self to the welfare of men. The noblest souls in all ages have done likewise. It was so in a remarkable degree with Baba Nának, who in the early part of the sixteenth century devoted himself to the reformation of his countrymen in India. He was the son of a poor man, and was a poor man himself, and owed, therefore, whatever noble influence he had solely to the nobility of his character. Moralising in his *Pictures of Indian Life* on this man's distinguished career, Mr. Cust presents him to our notice as an admirable specimen of one who was both great and good. "The life of a person," says Mr. Cust, "who by his actions and precepts has influenced the ideas and consciences of a large number of his fellow-creatures, both during his lifetime and for centuries after his death, can never be devoid of interest. When that influence

has not been owing to his wealth, rank, or power, but simply to his own merits, that man must be called **TRULY GREAT**; and when we find that his motives were unselfish, that after a long life, devoted to the instruction of others in the paths of virtue and moral purity, he died poor, and delegated his office, not to his children, but to one of his disciples whom he considered most virtuous, that man must be considered **TRULY GOOD AS WELL AS TRULY GREAT.**"

Amongst the many remarkable utterances of Christ there is scarcely one that is more worthy of being pondered over than the following. His disciples wished to become great. What was the recipe which he gave them? Was it, Get wealth, get honour, get reputation? Nothing whatever of the kind. "Whosoever will be great among you," said he, "let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." In other words, If you wish to become pre-eminently great, prove yourselves pre-eminently useful. The secret of greatness lies in that.

Christ's disciples, of course, were thinking of worldly position, and imagined that greatness consisted in exercising dominion as lords or princes, or in being "called of men Rabbi, Rabbi." Christ says, No; that real greatness can be displayed only by services rendered to mankind. Beyond controversy he was right. Despised as they may often be by their mistaken contemporaries, yet, as an undoubted fact, those whose memories posterity cherishes with the highest reverence are those who during their day and generation are the world's most noble benefactors.

CHAPTER III.

WHY WEALTH SHOULD BE SOUGHT AFTER.

WEALTH was of no benefit to the miser Elwes, who, in his greed for gain, was guilty of the pettiest meannesses. It was a source to him of perpetual vexation. Indeed, numbers who have it in the greatest abundance are the most wretched of men. And why? Well, philosophers, like Sir William Hamilton, perceiving this, have asserted that the agreeableness of wealth consists in the effort to get it rather than in its possession. That it does not consist in its mere possession is clear enough; for many who possess it are evidently not happy at all. Still, for all that, I doubt very much whether the effort to get it is found by men in general more agreeable than its possession. Indeed, I am sure that most people find its acquisition extremely irksome and laborious. It is said, I know, that the pleasure consists in the contest, not in the victory—in the endeavour to win it, not in the object won. Alexander wept when he had conquered the world. There is some truth, no doubt, in all this. As the chase is pleasant to the hunter, and the excitement of play to the gambler, so in some degree is the

pursuit of wealth to the man who is in want of it. But surely the possession of it is better. As the old proverb has it,—

A bird in hand is better far
Than two that in the bushes are.

Many, however, who have wealth certainly do not get out of it as much pleasure as they might. Misers, who lock it up and live like paupers, are often as truly miserable as their name imports: indeed, they can hardly be looked upon as sane. Their wealth is simply of no use to them at all, although, of course, if deposited with bankers, it is of use to other people.

It is not, however, to misers only that wealth does not bring the happiness which it ought. Hundreds who would not be described as miserly at all—perhaps as quite the reverse—find their wealth productive to them but of little pleasure. They use it? Yes—they often squander it, and yet, nevertheless, are none the happier. Well, in some cases I believe the reason to be that people imagine, or at least act as if they imagined, that the more money they spend on themselves the more benefit they will derive from it. No mistake can be greater. People never need more than enough. They can not eat much more, or drink much more, than others about them; and if they could they would be none the better for it. If they have a score of horses in their stables, they can ride but one at a time. Innumerable things, in the shape of luxuries, that they lavish their finances upon, they would be just as well without. Of course, they should live in a manner that befits their station; but at the same

time they should reflect that to enjoy wealth thoroughly they should employ it rightly. Those who derive the highest and purest satisfaction from its possession are undoubtedly those who endeavour to do the most good with it—promoting praiseworthy enterprises, encouraging useful popular movements, fostering industry, and behaving liberally, hospitably, and kindly towards their friends and neighbours and dependants. Such persons reap a delectation from wealth to which the miserly and the selfish are utter strangers. By affording them the means of gratifying their benevolence, it proves to them a well-spring sparkling with delights which never pall upon the taste. This is the true secret of how to get from wealth the full amount of pleasure it can give.

The conclusion, then, that we come to is this, that, although considerations of self-interest are not to be despised, and, indeed, are little likely to be, wealth is not to be desired on such grounds alone, but from motives also of philanthropy, for the power which it puts into its owner's hands of being widely useful in the world.

CHAPTER IV.

VARIOUS WAYS OF BEING USEFUL.

IT may be taken for granted that no man is born into the world to cumber the ground like the barren fig-tree, but to justify his existence by endeavouring, during his day and generation, to make himself of use to his fellow-men. The ways in which he may do so are innumerable. They may be summed up, however, if not with scientific accuracy, at any rate, with as much correctness as we require, under three heads—ways in which he may be useful to men's bodies; ways in which he may be useful to their minds; and, thirdly, ways in which he may be useful to their minds and bodies simultaneously. A few examples will plainly illustrate my meaning. A farmer, for instance, who provides grain for the miller or cattle for the butcher, is, by so doing, useful to men's bodies. So, similarly, is a labourer who tills the soil and makes it fruitful. So, again, charitable persons who support hospitals, clothiers who sell people clothes, bakers who furnish them with bread, and energetic capitalists who promote productive industry, and thereby cheapen the necessaries of civilised existence and add to the prosperity of the community, are all working in their several ways for the bodily welfare of those about them.

And so, too, people have it in their power to be useful to other people's minds. Schoolmasters, for instance, are so. So, again, may be preachers, authors of books, and writers in newspapers. So, again, may be lecturers on all sorts and varieties of subjects. So, again, may be those who speak kindly words of advice and sympathy to their friends in trouble. And example, too, often tells upon the mind more effectively than precept. And what beneficially affects the mind often simultaneously conduces to the healthy condition of the body, and what does good to the body very frequently at the same time acts as a tonic to the mind. In fine, it is sufficiently evident that, how many soever may be the ways in which men may be useful in the world to their fellow-men, they can be useful to them only in ways which must come under one or more of the three preceding classes.

Disinterested usefulness is, of course, usefulness of a higher and nobler sort than that which has in any degree a man's own personal profit for its object. No usefulness, however, is to be despised—not even usefulness of the most self-seeking type. Millions of labourers, for instance, and thousands of professional men and traders, depend entirely for their maintenance on their own exertions. If they are useful to the world, they are undoubtedly for the most part so with a view to their own interest. Their usefulness, however, is none the less usefulness for that.

Motives of gain, though not high motives, are by no means necessarily bad ones. If they have for their object sordid, base, dishonourable gains, then, of course, they are detestably wrong and de-

grading ; but not so if they have for their object gains which are fair and honest. If higher motives combine with them, so much the better. And as a rule they usually to some extent do. Useful work rarely, if ever, springs from motives which are entirely selfish. Most people usually, however much they may have at heart their own advantage, think something also of other people's interests ; and hundreds, I am convinced, could testify, if they would, that anxious though they are for their own welfare, and diligently as they labour to promote it, they, nevertheless, derive from work which is done for the benefit of others a pleasure which they fail altogether to obtain from work which is done solely to benefit themselves. In fact, men, as a rule admitting of but few exceptions, have benevolent motives combined even with their most apparently selfish ones.

It was said above that men may be useful to mankind in three ways—to their bodies ; to their minds ; or to their minds and bodies simultaneously. Those are essentially useful to men's minds who cultivate their intelligence, and impart to them useful knowledge. And essentially useful also to men's minds—indeed, pre-eminently so—are those who put good thoughts into their heads which bias their wills to right actions.

Valuable as those undoubtedly are,—indeed, absolutely necessary as they are to the world's welfare,—who in their various ways, as has been shown, are useful to the bodies of men, yet a far higher work is performed by those who usefully influence their minds, moulding aright their thoughts and convictions on which their conduct is dependent. Truly, to influence thus the minds of his

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fellow-men, is one of the very noblest objects that any man can set before him. Of course, to possess a far-reaching influence is a privilege that belongs to few. All men, however, may exert, if they will, some influence for good on the minds of others about them, and should do so to the best of their ability. If such were the aim of the majority of men, who can doubt that the world would be the better for it ; that it would become happier, wiser, and more intelligently moral than it is now ; that many a noxious error that now prevails in it would be exploded, and that many a wholesome truth would take root and flourish that is at present vetoed and tabooed ? In sober earnest, we want men of influence amongst us to have the courage to be honest, and plainly to tell us our faults ; we want them to leaven with enlightened notions the crass lump of our ignorance and stupidity ; we want such men to point out to us our mistakes, ridicule our follies, and make us ashamed of our vices. Men without influence over the minds of others are powerless to control or guide them ; whereas, on the other hand, as is illustrated abundantly by both ancient and modern history, men whose influence is commanding can work wonders,—directing the opinions of great masses of their countrymen, as a corn-field is swayed by the wind, by the mere weight of their personal authority. Men, too, whose influence is less can accomplish much ; and even those who have hardly any influence at all can do something. Clearly, then, to acquire influence that it may be used aright, and not with any view merely to our own selfish ends, is a worthy object of ambition.

CHAPTER V.

UPON WHAT INFLUENCE DEPENDS.

BUT upon what, we must next inquire, does any man's influence, whether great or little, depend? It depends, I think, mainly upon the following conditions:—upon his station in life, upon his pecuniary means, upon his intelligence upon his moral character, and last, not least, upon his physical vigour and appearance. In other words, the influence, which any man is capable of exercising in the world depends upon HIMSELF, and upon his CIRCUMSTANCES.

That his circumstances—that is to say, his wealth, his social position, the neighbourhood he dwells in, the kind of people he is concerned with, and so forth—have a great deal to do with the amount of influence he wields, there can be no doubt. At the same time, most certainly, it principally depends upon what he is in himself; namely, upon his intelligence, his health, his knowledge, his temper, his force of character—in short, upon his condition generally both of mind and body.

If with a view to being more usefully influential in the world a man endeavours by honourable means to better his circumstances, he is to be

applauded for so doing. It is extremely improbable, however, that he will ever succeed in making them exactly what he would like them to be. But he may do what is far better, and that is, *make himself what he ought to be*. All rational people can, if they will, to a very great extent accomplish this. If they cannot improve their circumstances, they can at any rate improve themselves. And surely, so far as in them lies, it is incumbent upon them to do so.

What, then, should a man endeavour to make himself in order to be able to exercise in the world such an influence for good as he ought? Why, plainly, he should endeavour to make himself as excellent morally, as proficient mentally, and as perfect physically, as he is capable of being. He can make himself no more, and he should be content to make himself no less.

And first as to MORAL EXCELLENCE. As a condition of useful influence its importance is supreme. The mere reputation of possessing it carries enormous weight. Thus, whilst a man who has a good name in the world, even though he may deserve a bad one, is relied upon as a person of integrity and honour, a man who has a bad name in the world, even though he may deserve a good one, is invariably treated with distrust and suspicion. Who would choose a rogue, if he knew it, for a position of responsibility, or be guided by one whose sincerity he questioned? Clearly, then, *to obtain influence a man should get, if he can, a good name*. It is the surest passport to confidence, and, according to the Book of Proverbs, of more value than great riches.

What, then, can possibly, it may be asked, be of

more value than a good name? According to scoundrels, nothing. "I would give a thousand pounds for your good name," said the infamous Colonel Charteris once to a man of unblemished reputation—"I would give a thousand pounds for your good name, for well I know that, if I only had it, I could clutch ten thousand by the help of it." And what says the detestable Iago?

Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls.
Who steals my purse steals trash: 'tis something,
nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.

Alas, then, for all sorts of swindlers, hypocrites, parasites, and pretenders! Well, indeed, do they know the value of a good name. When it is gone the game is up with them. Losing reputation, they lose everything, and are left poor and destitute indeed.

But not so with honest men. Valuable to them as a good name undoubtedly is, dearer to them than riches as it is, important to them as it is as a means of influence, and as a passport to confidence, there is yet that which they value more, and of which, if they are true to themselves, nothing whatever can deprive them, and that is *the inestimable possession of moral integrity*. It is quite possible—though, happily, hardly probable in any individual instance—that a really good man may be so totally misjudged as to lose, at least for a time, his good name entirely. The tongue of detraction may be busy against him to ruin and

blacken his fair fame ; the ear of envy may listen with delight to the insinuations against him of slander and malevolence ; ignorance and malice may hold him up to reprobation, prejudice distort his motives, and pride regard him with contempt. In short, his good name may be utterly blasted and destroyed. Such cases before now have occurred. The best men have been execrated as the worst, and subjected to popular indignation. What has been their comfort ? Why, the sense of rectitude within—the consciousness of high-minded aims, and of faithfully performed endeavours. A good name is good, but this assuredly is better.

Take thou no care for aught save truth and right,
Content, if such thy fate, to die obscure.
Wealth palls ; and honours ; fame may not endure ;
And loftier souls soon weary of delight.
Keep innocence ; be all a true man ought ;
Let neither pleasures tempt, nor pains appal.
Who hath this he hath all things, having nought ;
Who hath it not, hath nothing, having all.

But, although moral integrity is to be preferred to a good name, a good name, nevertheless, is to be regarded as so unspeakably precious as to be better than great riches, and indeed than anything else that the heart of man can desire. To be founded, however, on as secure a foundation as it is possible to be, it must be founded on moral integrity. No other basis for it whatever can be viewed as trustworthy at all. Supposing, however, that the case were otherwise, and that it could be built up, surely and certainly, on hypocrisy and deception, what honourable man on such terms would care to

have it, any more than he would deign to assume the letters of a sham degree, or to palm off a fictitious bank-note on an unsuspecting creditor?

The conclusion, then, of the whole matter is this, that if a man hopes to have a good name, and to exert such an influence for good around him as a good name may ensure, *it is above everything necessary that he should preserve his moral integrity.* It is the only thing that gives intrinsic value to a good name. If he has moral integrity and acts accordingly, he may safely leave his good name to take care of itself, and may rest satisfied that it is never likely to come to any very serious harm. If, however, he has it not, and should still retain by dint of successful hypocrisy some portion of the respect that is due to worthier men, not only is he destitute of what alone he should regard as his soul's jewel, as his pearl of great price, but the influence he exerts in the word, in all probability, will be to a great extent entirely an influence for evil; or, at any rate, will be an influence which, if it does not actually further and promote the progress of evil, will yet hinder sadly the advancement of what is true and good. It is often pleasanter, for instance, to act as other people act, and to smile complacently on tenets that one scorns, than to be plain and outspoken. It is often more agreeable to countenance wrong-doing and wrong-thinking than to be thoroughly sincere and straightforward. In this way it frequently is that men throw away their chances of honestly exercising their influence—nay, possibly exercise an influence which is in direct contradiction to their minds. Surely, however, no genuine man should condescend to sail under a false flag, or

pusillanimously conceal his colours when conscience demands that he should show them.

It has been said that, with a view to personal influence, a man should endeavour to be—morally, mentally, and physically—as perfect as he can be. The importance of moral integrity, moral manliness, moral courage, has just been insisted on. Indeed, to be morally good should be a man's first and highest aim. But equally important, nevertheless, are MENTAL INTELLIGENCE and PHYSICAL VIGOUR. As to the former of these, what possible influence can any man possess without it? Who would listen for a moment to the babblings of a fool? Surely it is as plain to anybody as the very sunlight that a man must have a fair modicum of intelligence, and must cultivate it too, to be of any significance in the world. Indeed, nature herself drives him to improve it in some degree, whether he is aware of it or not. Even the savage as he roams in the wilderness will thoughtfully plan and plot how best to capture his enemies or his prey, and will thus, by using them, develop the keenness of his wits. His cunning and ingenuity are often very surprising. It is evident, therefore, that a man is not necessarily a simpleton or a dullard because he has had no education, in the commonly understood sense of that expression. No; some of the most uneducated people in the world, so to call them, are far wiser in many ways than those who have been subjected to school training. And the reason is, that the circumstances of their lives have called for a special activity certain congenital faculties of their minds which have thereby become strengthened and invigorated beyond the rest. A savage is remarkably crafty simply because the circumstances

amidst which he has been placed have obliged his being so. The faculties of mind which a man inherits from his parents, and which he uses most, will, in proportion to his natural capacity, be developed most. Thus, exercising the memory is the best possible means of improving it. I knew a woman who could neither read nor write who yet managed, as well as any well-taught tradesman could have done, a greengrocer's shop of some pretensions in a borough town. She booked in her memory accounts which her rivals booked in their books, and proved invariably correct; so remarkably may this individual faculty of the mind be improved by diligent exercise. And so with its other faculties; they can be developed only by employment. Thus, in order to become a sound reasoner, a man should habituate himself to weigh evidence and to detect flaws in argumentation; if he aspires to be a ready speaker, he should cultivate the faculty of speech; if he has a talent for being humorous, and wishes to improve it, he should give play to his sense of humour, and to the aptitude which belongs to him for perceiving the ridiculous side of things. And so in all cases. Whatever intellectual faculties he is endowed with he can expand them only by arousing them to activity. This as much conduces to his cerebral or mental development—call it which we please—as the exercise of a limb or any other organ of the body contributes to its growth and vigour.

But moral integrity and a well-developed and instructed mind are not the only factors of a good influence in the world of which a wise man should seek to possess himself. Vastly important to him with this end in view as these unquestionably are,

there is yet, as has been already intimated, another requirement of equivalent worth which he must not be content to be without, and that is **PHYSICAL VIGOUR**. His influence for good in the world, so far as it belongs to himself and not to his external circumstances, depends entirely upon these three conditions, and so far as he lacks either of them will his power of exerting such an influence be frustrated. What is he without morality? What is he without intelligence? And, finally, what can he do without physical vigour? Clearly, this last endowment, which will be more fully treated of in a subsequent chapter, is just as essential as the others; for, exactly in proportion as his bodily organism is unequal to the demands made upon it by his mind, will his mind be unequal to the due fulfilment of its work. This surely is an argument which no sensible man will despise.

The utter wickedness of those who squander their health and their finances in dissolute and extravagant living is deplorable to witness; but hardly less so is it to behold promising youths permanently crippling their constitutions by an over-devotion to study. It is incumbent upon them, of course, diligently to develop their intellectual faculties, and to store their minds with valuable information, but never is it worth their while to do so at such a cost as is involved in the lasting deterioration of their physical well-being.

A sound condition of body is in itself so great a boon to mankind, that thousands seek it with no higher object in view. It is, however, for the nobler purpose of possessing energetic minds that rational beings should chiefly value it. They should

keep their bodies as healthful as possible, not only for the pleasure which health brings, but for the sake especially of leading lives of usefulness, and of performing their parts in the world with credit and intelligence.



CHAPTER VI.

SELF-EDUCATION.

IT was said in the foregoing chapter that a man must have a fair modicum of intelligence, and must cultivate it, too, to be of any significance in the world. Without it he is a mere cipher, an utter non-entity, incapable of improving his prospects in life, and of no weight whatever in the community. Even the most talented of men, if their mental training has been neglected, will often, in these days of keen competition, find themselves baffled in the struggle for promotion. How much more so with those whose abilities are meagre? Clearly, then, with a view to success, and the influence which success brings, education is absolutely indispensable.

I speak here in particular of the education of the mind. I would observe, however, that I by no means overlook the fact, that upon the vigorous development of the body in youth, and upon its sound condition afterwards, the aptitude of the mind for work is materially dependent. Hence, whilst I advocate the education of the mind, I would be understood to do so with the proviso that it be conducted in obedience to the requirements of health, which is to be regarded surely by all sensible people as too great a source of happiness

to be needlessly thrown away. Indeed, without it life is hardly worth having at all.

I advocate, then, the training of the mind, not to the neglect of, but in conjunction with, attention to the well-being of the body, and I assert that *any system or kind of mental education or study which results in permanent injury to the bodily health deserves most strongly to be condemned.* Mental education should be pursued with regularity and energy, but never to excess, never without sufficient intervals of corporeal exercise.

The more defective a man's school education may have been, the greater necessity there is that he should make up his mind to strive to remedy his deficiencies by endeavouring afterwards to improve himself. He should adopt, in short, a course of self-training. Indeed, to do so, more or less, is incumbent upon every man.

And what is the object he should have in doing so? In other words, what is the object of self-education,—which will be the theme of this and a few succeeding chapters? Why, its object, in the main, is the same as that of all mental education whatever. It is twofold: firstly, to expand the intellectual faculties—memory, imagination, reasoning, and the rest; and, secondly, to furnish the mind with useful information. I will consider the last point first, and will begin by remarking that useful information may be said, with sufficient accuracy for our purpose, to be made up broadly of two kinds of knowledge—of knowledge that is general, and of knowledge that is special. Thus, for example, at school and college a man's education is usually, for the most part, of a general character—that is to say, is intended to have

no peculiar bearing on his future professional career. When, however, he leaves school, and has finished his preliminary collegiate curriculum, it becomes more special. He devotes himself to law, to theology, to physic, to architecture, to engineering, or to the study of whatever may be the particular kind of work he is destined afterwards to pursue; and at length, being well launched in the business or profession of his choice, he is pronounced to have completed his education.

Completed his education! Yes, so people term it. All, however, that they can properly mean is, that he has done with schooling, and is qualified to ply his craft. They cannot mean that he knows everything, or even that he knows everything that he should know within the very limited and contracted sphere of his own professional studies. They cannot mean that he is so learned, and so accomplished, as to require no further information. No; a man's education is never complete, and never should be regarded as complete. The wisest know but little, and that little they are liable to forget. Hence, when their days of school and college education are over and gone, they need, all through the remainder of their lives, to be perpetually educating themselves.

But how can they educate themselves? If a man who acts as his own lawyer has a fool for his client, surely a man who educates himself has an ignoramus for his tutor. True, unquestionably; but who cannot see that the cases differ altogether? A man knowing nothing of law cannot safely act as his own lawyer at all—indeed, he would be exceedingly silly to attempt it; but a man who is

ignorant of law, or divinity, or engineering, or business, or science, or of anything else, may do a great deal, if he will, to gain the information he requires. Experience abundantly shows that any man who has the desire may do very much efficiently to educate himself.

But self-taught men, it is said, are by no means generally the best taught men, and are often no better than mere vulgar pedants. I should like, however, very much to know where a man can be found in the whole world who is not, in some degree at least, a self-taught man. Why, all men are self-taught, more or less. The greater part of what almost any man knows he has chiefly taught himself. Without his own mental faculties having been stimulated into activity he could positively have learnt nothing. I suppose, however, that when people speak of self-taught men they usually mean men who, not having had in their early years the benefit of a liberal education, have gained afterwards by their own efforts such information as they were able. It is quite true that such men are not invariably the most cultured men, though some of them, I fancy, would put to shame multitudes who have had greater advantages. However, be that as it may, all men are principally self-taught. Even the most highly educated in the land, who are distinguished in the domains of literature or science, have been mainly their own teachers. Ever since they have left school or college they have been busily occupied in adding to their knowledge, and they have learnt, we may depend upon it, immensely more from their own study and research than ever they derived from the tuition of others. Thus, school education

is merely a foundation to be built upon. In other words, having passed his pupilage, a man must educate himself.

But educate himself in what? Well, first of all, if he has any regard for his own interest, and is not too indolent, or too fond of pleasure, to devote himself steadily to work, he will educate himself to a better and better knowledge, and a more and more efficient practice, of whatever business or profession he has chosen to adopt. This will be, and certainly should be, his chief concern. A divine, above everything, should be learned in theology, a physician in therapeutics, and a soldier in the art of war. But a mere specialist no man should be content to be. An intelligent being, as Lord Brougham once concisely expressed it, should not only endeavour to know everything of something, but also, so far as he can, to know something of everything. That specialists perform during their day and generation invaluable services to the world they live in cannot for a moment be called in question. They need not, however, be mere specialists—men whose thoughts are so confined to their own peculiar studies or pursuits that they can talk of nothing else—but may be men whose minds are enlarged, and whose sympathies are broad and generous; who take a keen interest in passing events, and can converse agreeably and intelligently on almost any topics whatever that may be mooted in ordinary society.

That we must necessarily have men amongst us who devote their time and their talents to particular departments of study is, of course, evident enough. The field of human knowledge

is so extensive that no man can command the whole of it. It must needs be divided into portions to be made available for use. Thus it is that universal science is cut up into innumerable "ologies." One man takes to theology, another to philology, another to geology, another to anthropology, another to archæology, another to animal and vegetable physiology, and so on. No single individual can possibly be equally learned in them all, or even can master thoroughly anything more than a mere fractional part of them. Indeed, it is highly probable that to gain a consummate acquaintance with even one or two of the more difficult of them is beyond what most average people could accomplish in a lifetime. It is plain, in short, that no one can be eminently proficient in more than a very few branches of study. As it is folly to put too many irons into one fire, too many eggs into one basket, or too many articles into one box, so it is unreasonable to endeavour to cram too much learning into one head. There are men, no doubt, in the world who have the credit of being such intellectual prodigies, such marvels of encyclopædic information, as to know something of almost everything; but then, truly, of almost everything they know next to nothing. Thus it is clear that, if human knowledge is to be advanced at all, it must be divided into sections. In other words, we must have specialists—men devoted to special lines of study and special departments of employment. Indeed, my conviction is, that no man, however well off he may be, properly fulfils his duty as a civilised being unless he is a specialist in something—unless he has made himself as proficient

as possible in some one or more special provinces of knowledge, or is capable of transacting with special excellence some one work or another for the benefit of the world he lives in. However, be this as it may, specialists—in the sense of being under the necessity of earning their livelihood by certain special occupations—men in general must be, whether they like it or not, although too often, it must be confessed, they turn out but indifferent performers.

I am quite aware that by the term “specialist” is commonly understood, not a man who adopts some special art, or occupation, or profession, or who studies some special science, but a man who takes up some special branch of a profession, or some special department of a science, or who, as a skilled artisan, can do certain special sorts of work with peculiar dexterity. Such men, no doubt, are specialists, properly so called. All men, however, who have special occupations are specialists in a broader sense, and whatever their special occupations may be—provided, of course, that they are irreproachable—in them it should be their pride to excel. A lawyer’s study, if he has his heart in his work, will naturally be devoted to law, a theologian’s to theology, and a banker’s to the affairs of banking. But no man, as was remarked above, should be content to be a specialist—should be content, I mean, with acquiring knowledge of a special or professional kind, to the neglect of knowledge of a miscellaneous description. Indeed, so convinced are some people of this, that they accuse professional knowledge of having a tendency, when ardently pursued, to narrow and contract the mind. I deny that it has any such a

tendency at all. Knowledge is never cramping to the mind, but just the very reverse. If a professional man should chance to be cramped and narrow in his ideas, it is not because he has a competent knowledge of his profession, but because he has a deficient knowledge of other things. A man who is for ever "talking shop," as the saying is, will most probably be voted a bore. What he wants, however, is, not a less knowledge of his profession—for we may be very sure that he can never have too thorough a mastery of that—but a more extended knowledge of, or at any rate a more sympathising interest in, matters of everyday concern.

No, it is not knowledge that is cramping, but ignorance. Clergymen, for example, are sometimes narrow in their ecclesiastical views because their theological reading has been kept within too limited a range; because, whilst they have been devotedly studious of old-world divinity, they have not familiarised themselves sufficiently with the liberal religious movements and opinions of their times, and thus have been content, while the world has been advancing, to be complacently standing still. And still more is this the case with doctors. Antiquated medical theories and modes of practice are so constantly being supplanted by new, as science makes fresh discoveries, that physicians, of all men in the world, could least afford to rotate in the grooves of their grandfathers. In fine, it is incumbent upon all thoughtful and intelligent men to endeavour, by every means in their power, to keep themselves well abreast of the knowledge and information of their times—and that not only as they bear on their special professions

or pursuits, but also as they concern them as men who take an interest in the progress of humanity, and in events which are occurring around them from day to day. As a simple matter of course, they will read the newspapers. They should also, as opportunity allows them, digest the contents of the foremost literary works of their generation, and of the best contemporary periodicals. They should study, too, and that repeatedly, sacred and profane history, and especially the thrilling history of their own country—of which, surely, as Englishmen who have any pretensions whatever to culture, they should be ashamed to be found glaringly ignorant. They should make themselves, moreover, as familiar as they can with the standard authors of their nation—Shakespeare, Milton, and the rest; and with the immortal writers of Greece and Rome they should occasionally renew their acquaintance.

CHAPTER VII.

MEMORY.

AND here a few words may be appropriately offered on the subject of MEMORY—a mental faculty which no man, unless reduced to a condition of the most abject imbecility, can be entirely without; but destitute of which we could possess no knowledge at all. All rational beings exercise it more or less, and cannot help doing so. Indeed, if they did not, as a muscle would be shrivelled up for want of use, their powers of memory would dwindle to zero. The brain, like every other bodily organ, is less vigorous than it would otherwise be from want of proper exercise. Now, although memory, psychologically viewed, is a function of the mind, physiologically regarded it is a function of the brain. Thus, exercising the memory is exercising the brain, and strengthening it for a particular function. That the memory is correlated to the brain there can be no doubt whatever. If a man has an unusually retentive memory he must necessarily also have a corresponding condition of brain. What that corresponding condition is it may be difficult to determine; but that it must exist is unquestionable. Size of brain has something to do with the matter,

and quality of brain more ; but what has probably most to do with it is an inherited aptitude in the brain—just as a man may have an inherited aptitude in any other of his bodily organs—for a certain form of activity, or, to express the same thing psychologically, an inherited aptitude in the mind for acting in the peculiar way which we call remembering. As aptitudes of body are inherited, so also, undoubtedly, are aptitudes of mind. And such aptitudes are improvable, and are developed, by exercise. All inherit some aptitude for remembering, but all do not inherit it in an equal degree. Nor do all inherit in an equal degree an aptitude for the same kind of memory. Some have a better natural memory than others for forms and faces—that is, for things they have seen ; and others for names and tunes—that is, for things they have heard. Impressions through the eye have most to do with the one kind of memory, and impressions through the ear with the other. However, whatever be the aptitude, and whether little or great, it may be cultivated and improved by exercise—indeed, can be developed by no other means ; and, the weaker it is congenitally, the more it should be strengthened by being constantly summoned into use.

But how is it to be summoned into use ? To answer this question we must inquire what kind of activity takes place in our minds previously to our remembering anything. In short, what is it that our minds do as a necessary preliminary to their being able to retain the knowledge of anything at all ? What they do is evident enough, and it is this—they exercise an act of attention. If we examine the matter, we shall assuredly find

that *attention is at the bottom of memory*; that antecedently to our memory of any separate fact, or word, or thing, or sound, or of any separate combination of facts, or words, or things, or sounds, there has occurred in our minds—it may have been long previously—an act or acts of attention to such facts, or words, or things, or sounds. It is plain that without, at some time or another, having given our attention to it, we could remember nothing. It is obvious, then, that in order to exercise memory we must exercise the necessary antecedent of memory, and that is an act of attention. The more deeply the perception of anything is impressed on our minds by the attention that we pay to it, the more permanently do we keep it in remembrance.

Whether a man's memory be naturally good or not depends entirely on the character of his mind, or, physiologically expressed, on the character of his brain, and a greater or less aptitude for receiving mental impressions from attention will invariably be found at the bottom of it. Persons, therefore, who have indifferent memories, and wish to improve them, should increase and strengthen as much as possible—and practice materially conduces to this end—the habit of attending to whatever fact or thing they are desirous of retaining in their minds.

But the mind's capability of remembering not only varies greatly with individuals, but with the same individual at different times. A mere glance of observation, when the fact or thing observed is strange and novel to the observer, will often impress it more indelibly on his memory than in other cases an act of prolonged attention.

However, notwithstanding this, attention is the main condition of memory. The reason why a novel or strange circumstance is better remembered than another is simply that at the moment of its occurrence it arrests the observer's more vivid advertence. By so doing, it at once imprints itself deeply on the tablet of his mind, and hence is permanently retained. Even those whose memories are unusually bad, will remember to their dying day things which have struck them forcibly.

Persons whose memories are naturally good differ from those whose memories are congenitally bad in this, that their minds, so to put it, are made of more plastic materials, and are therefore more easily susceptible of impressions. They remember things, not without attention—for that can never be—but with a less force or duration of attention than persons with bad memories require. The latter can remember things which at any particular time have arrested their attention vividly, or to which their attention afterwards has been frequently drawn; but things by which their attention has not at any time been forcibly excited, or things to which they have but rarely devoted their attention afterwards, they will entirely forget. Not so with those whose memories are congenitally good. Thoroughly to have attended to a thing once, even though there was nothing strange or striking about it, will often be sufficient to fix it indelibly on their minds. They do not require either so much immediate force of attention, or so much subsequent iteration of attention, as those whose memories are indifferent. With regard to their capability of receiving im-

pressions, their minds may be compared to wax, whereas the minds of those whose memories are bad may be likened to lead. To indent the wax is easy, but to indent the lead you must either use greater momentary force, or force of a longer duration. So with a man who has a bad memory. He will remember what has at any time been impressed upon him forcibly, or what has been impressed upon him by frequent iteration, but of other circumstances he will preserve but little recollection.

For those who have indifferent memories, to attend to a thing once is by no means usually sufficient. I ask a person, let it be supposed, to tell me the name of a man that I see before me, and he immediately complies with my request. The next day I see the same man, but have no recollection of his name. I am told it again, and perhaps forget it again. At length, however, after repeatedly hearing his name—that is, after repeatedly having had my mental attention turned to it—it becomes so familiar to me that I cannot forget it if I will.

As nails by constant hammering are driven fixedly home into the very toughest blocks of wood, so knowledge—at least a respectable modicum of it—by a process of perpetual iteration is drummed into the heads of the very dullest schoolboys. By directing their attention, day after day, to the same thing, they at last become able to retain it permanently in their minds. Men of sluggish memories would derive advantage from applying to themselves a similar discipline.

And even those whose memories are good need

occasionally to refresh them. The most intelligent and honourable of men not unfrequently err in the statements which they make from recollection. The finest memory will now and then prove false. Lord Macaulay had an unrivalled memory, and yet historical critics inform us that his version of facts is far from being invariably correct. And so with Niebuhr. He trusted to his memory for details where less able writers would have gone to their original authorities, and he fell consequently into numerous mistakes. Of much that men think they remember clearly they have but nebulous and deceptive impressions; for the outlines of our reminiscences, through lapse of time, not only become fainter than they were at first, but are liable also to be distorted by the operation of the imagination. So necessary is it, as occasion calls for it, to test, if we can, the truthfulness of memory, and to reduce its exaggerated representations to the proportions of reality.

The recollection of anything, it has been said, is invariably connected with an act or acts of attention. Indeed, we cannot even so much as perceive a thing, a truth, or an historical fact, unless we attend to it. Much less, of course, without attention having been given to it, can we afterwards remember it. The remembrance that we have of anything at all is simply the mental representation that we have of a previous perception. In proportion to the clearness of the original perception, and the capability of the mind for receiving an adequate impression of it, is the accuracy of the representation which is afterwards produced in memory. Since, then, without attention we could have no perception—and still less a

mental impression—of anything at all, it is abundantly clear that without attention we could positively remember nothing, even though we were gifted with the finest natural memories imaginable. If we remember a particular tree, or a mountain, or a house, of course the attention of our minds must at some time or another have been given to it. If, again, we remember some lines from Byron or Tennyson or Milton, it is not only because we have the faculty of remembering, but especially because we have previously given such attention to the lines as was sufficient to impress them on our minds—looking at them fixedly, and perhaps reading and re-reading them over and over again. If, again, we wish to recall accurately to our minds anything that we have totally or partially forgotten, as, for example, what a certain building is like, evidently the best plan we can adopt is, to go directly to the building and give our attention to it anew. If that is out of our power, and we have at hand no person or description or diagram to help us in our difficulty, then, plainly, the only resource left to us is our own mental reflection. It is wonderful, however, how many things that seem totally forgotten may often be recovered by this means. Thus, if the name of somebody I was formerly acquainted with is seemingly at the moment completely erased from my mind, I may possibly be able to recover it by a vigorous effort of thought. Such an effort is in itself a fine intellectual exercise, and, although troublesome, has this advantage to recommend it, that, if successful in any individual instance, it fixes what is thus recalled to mind more indelibly on the memory than any other

means whatever. Should I, again, have forgotten certain words that I wish to quote, or the precise nature of certain historical facts, I may possibly be able to recover all I want by mere reflection. To ensure accuracy, however, in such a case as this, it is generally advisable for a man, if not absolutely necessary, to go to the authorities which were the original objects of his attention, and con over their language anew. This is often requisite in the case of men of the most stupendous memories; how much more so for those whose memories are feeble!

Attention, it has been said, is a prime condition of all acts of memory. It is evidently exercised in all cases of recognition. Thus, if I wish to know, when I next see him, a stranger I am speaking to in the street, I scan him with careful observation. I mark well his form and features, and notice his peculiarities of voice and articulation. I receive, and by this means impress upon my mind, a clear perception of him. I meet him a twelvemonth afterwards, and at once recognise him as the man with whom I had been conversing a year before. Why do I thus remember him? Why, chiefly, of course, because I gave my attention to him when I first saw him, and so impressed what he was like on the tablet of my mind, that the perception of him which I then had was sufficiently strong to be calculated to remain there for an indefinite time afterwards. When I see him again my mind, clearly, operates in this way. I have a perception of him—strictly speaking, of course, it is the memory of a perception of him—already in my mind. Well, when I see him again I perceive him again—that is to say, my mind has

a second perception of him. Well, what it does next is this—it compares these two perceptions; it compares my present perception with my past, my present perception of the man before me with the perception of him which I experienced when first I saw him. The two perceptions agreeing, I am instantly convinced that he is the same. Indeed, strange as it may sound to say so, we never meet casually a friend or an acquaintance with a look of welcome but our minds must necessarily have performed, however rapidly and unconsciously to ourselves, a similar process of comparison.

A great deal is said by writers on Mnemonics about *the advantage of associating together in the mind ideas we wish to remember*. They tell us that ideas suggest ideas, and that one idea will often so tie itself to another that we cannot have the one without its recalling the other. This is quite true. Take any series of naturally-to-be-connected ideas, and it is surprising how easily they may be remembered. Now words, of course, represent ideas. Take then, for example, the following string of twenty words :—Island—sea—ships—sailors—admirals—generals—armies—navies—Nelson—Napoleon—Wellington—boots—shoes—stockings—wool—sheep—cows—vaccination—disease—health. Connect them together, each to the next, by the ideas they stand for, and they will instantly so suggest one another, that the whole of them may be repeated without difficulty either backwards or forwards. The two ideas of which “island” and “sea” are the verbal signs will, when once associated in thought, immediately suggest one another. So, again, with “sea” and

"ships"; so, again, with "ships" and "sailors"; and so, one after another, with the rest.

That ideas may be connected together in the mind so as to recall one another is a little bit of practical knowledge of which ingenious people sometimes make considerable use when they wish to remind themselves of things which they fear they might otherwise forget. Thus, a man will tie a knot in his pocket-handkerchief to bring back to his mind something which he wants to remember. In other words, he will connect, no matter how, an idea in his mind with the idea of a knot in his pocket-handkerchief, so that the latter may recall the former. A speaker, again, by carefully associating his leading ideas, will remember the sequence of his topics. Similarly, a schoolboy, in learning a piece of poetry or prose, unless he learns it absolutely by rote, which he is hardly likely to do, will so connect in his mind words with words, sentence with sentence, part with part—that is, ideas with ideas—that, each suggesting the one to follow, they may serve as internal prompters to him when he has afterwards to go through the ordeal of repeating the lesson to his master.

Ideas, when connected together with the mental intention of making one idea call up another, may be said to be connected together artificially. The vast majority of the ideas, however, which enter our minds, are called up within us naturally or spontaneously—that is to say, without our intending it at all. They arise whether we will or not. A present thought or perception will constantly suggest a past, even against our inclination, and the idea or thought recalled by it will often

itself recall a whole train of others. By taking advantage of their knowledge of this natural fact, men use artificially, as we have seen, ideas to recall ideas.

Ideas that resemble one another are likely to recall one another. If I see a Japanese to-day resembling somewhat a Chinaman that I saw yesterday, in all probability my present perception of the Japanese will recall to my mind my past perception of the Chinaman. Again, ideas that present a striking contrast to one another have a tendency to reproduce one another. If I see an unusually tall man to-day, he may remind me by force of contrast of a dwarf that I saw yesterday. So with things or persons which we usually see together, and rarely see apart—when we think of one, we often cannot prevent ourselves from thinking also of the other. And so, lastly, with things which our minds realise as invariably coming in succession, the sight or the thought of one will frequently summon back to our minds the consequences which belong to it. Thus, thinking of copious rains in Abyssinia might very naturally suggest to us reflections about inundations in the Valley of the Nile.

This is the natural law of the reproduction of thoughts in memory, and the knowledge of it may be found frequently of much practical use. Thus, if we want to remember any particular thing, the best plan we can adopt is to link it at once with some idea which, when necessary, will recall it. I am told, for instance, that a certain man I see before me is called Johnson. Well, if at the moment of observing him I notice that he is a large-boned, unwieldy man *like* Dr. Johnson, the

next time I see him I shall be pretty sure to remember his name. And so, on the other hand, if he is a tiny, diminutive, slim, and nimble man, and I think to myself how singularly *unlike* he is to what heavy Johnson must have been, the two ideas of the little man and his great namesake will be so united in my mind by force of contrast that I shall remember his name without fail when I see him again. Associating ideas in the mind in this way not only often prompts the memory in time of need, but tends also, I imagine, to improve it.

A word here about Arts of Memory, commonly so called. As methods of strengthening the memory they are of small avail, but as dodges for assisting it they are often highly serviceable. Grey's "Memoria Technica" is a system of this kind. Many, unquestionably, have found it of much use. Indeed, for recalling dates, I have often found it so myself. It should be borne in mind, however, that, however seemingly wonderful are the feats of memory it may enable us to perform, it does little more to invigorate the memory than a telescope or microscope does to invigorate the eyes. It is a method, too, which for ordinary everyday reminiscences is of no utility at all. For them we have necessarily to rely, not on such lines of memorial gibberish as are to be found in manuals of mnemonics, but entirely on such powers of memory as it may be our lot to have. It behoves us, therefore, to preserve them in a condition of efficiency and vigour. And with this object in view three facts should be carefully heeded:—firstly, that our memory of anything depends principally upon the force, duration, or

reiteration of attention that we devote to it ; secondly, that the habit of attention increases with acts of attention ; and, thirdly, that the faculty of remembering is strengthened by efforts of remembering. Let a man habitually bethink himself of these three simple but important facts, and act accordingly—at the same time keeping his body, so far as he is able, in a sound state of health—and then his memory will be as good as he can make it.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRAVELLING.

TRAVELLING is sometimes considered an essential part of a liberal education, and formerly a certain number of years spent with a tutor in making a tour of Europe was the customary routine of young Englishmen of fortune. They were supposed to derive from it, not only a knowledge of foreign countries, but also a refinement and polish which they could not otherwise acquire. At any rate, when they returned home they were looked upon as having seen the world, and were held in estimation accordingly. In what other respects, however, they were in any degree the better for this once fashionable episode to an academical career, it would have been difficult in most cases to have discovered.

"In England," says Adam Smith, "it becomes every day more and more the custom to send young people to travel in foreign countries immediately upon their leaving school, and without sending them to any university. Our young people, it is said, generally return home much improved by their travels. A young man who goes abroad at seventeen or eighteen, and returns home at one-and-twenty, returns three or

four years older than when he was sent abroad ; and at that age it is very difficult not to improve a good deal in three or four years. In the course of his travels he generally acquires some knowledge of one or two foreign languages—a knowledge, however, which is seldom sufficient to enable him either to speak or write them with propriety. In other respects he commonly returns home more conceited, more unprincipled, more dissipated, and more incapable of any serious application, either to study or business, than he could well have become in so short a time had he lived at home.”

Locke, writing a century earlier, speaks of the travelled youths of his day as too often returning full of admiration for the vanities and frivolities which they had met with abroad, and without having gained any useful information about the places or people they had seen, “retaining a relish and memory of those things wherein their liberty took its first swing rather than of what would make them better and wiser.” In short, they made their so-called tour of Europe a mere circuit of extravagance and folly. Probably the same may be the case now with travellers not a few.

Johnson remarked once to Boswell that travelling into distant countries “enlarges the mind,” and that “dignity of character is derived from it.” I suppose by asserting that travelling “enlarges the mind” he meant that it increases the stock of the mind’s ideas. Of course it does that. It gives people a knowledge of men and things which they did not previously possess. Indeed, no man, unless an absolute idiot, could travel far without learning something of which he was before in ignorance. The merest child, by being taken to

travel, would pick up scraps of information. It should be remembered, however, that a man who should see the world only with the wisdom of a child would know it no better than a child, even though he saw the whole of it.

Johnson's next assertion—that travelling gives a man "dignity of character"—by no means invariably holds good, since a large number of the most travelled men are about as undignified specimens of humanity as can be found anywhere. Nevertheless, to have travelled much—especially if a man has made a good use of his travels—is certainly something to be proud of, and should his consciousness of having done so betray itself in a dignified demeanour, it were no marvel, though, as a fact, I think those who have travelled all the world over, if they are men of sense, usually display less pride in having done so than many who have travelled but very little.

That travelling has very much to be said in its favour no one will dispute. It is some men's constant business, and other men's occasional pleasure. As a means, however, of self-education, it has perhaps been unduly extolled. The knowledge people get from it depends in a remarkable degree on the knowledge they take with them when they start, and, more still, on the maturity of their intelligence, and on their having duly cultivated habits of attentive observation. However, be this as it may, it is only a wealthy few who can possibly avail themselves of very much of it in the way of amusement. A holiday trip of any considerable distance or duration is an indulgence for which a great many have neither the leisure nor the funds. Indeed, with all our

boasted facilities of locomotion, the peregrinations of thousands amongst us are confined to a contracted area. They are compelled by their circumstances, if not to remain absolutely from year to year without ever stirring from their homes, at least to limit their wanderings within a narrow compass. They may console themselves, however, with the reflection that it is not always those who have travelled most who are the best acquainted with the world. Indeed, highly conducive to health and happiness as travelling may be admitted to be, as a means of self-improvement—as a means of acquiring such information as is needed by the common run of well-instructed people—its merits have probably been over-rated. Certainly many who have travelled very little indeed sometimes know more about this globe of ours and its inhabitants than those who have well-nigh perambulated its entire circumference. As Emerson says, "The stuff of all countries is just the same." If you know one, you can understand what is said about another; and if you have seen this mountain you can appreciate the description of that. Verily, by the assistance of books and photographs, and of the excellent letterpress and illustrations which high-class periodicals supply, a man in these days may learn very much about the world he lives in, whose opportunities of journeying over it have been limited to a span. Of course, I do not for a moment deny that actually visiting and remaining in foreign countries will stamp their characteristic features, their languages, their customs, their manners, and their modes of trade and government more indelibly on the mind than

any other means whatever. Graphic accounts, nevertheless, and good pictorial sketches, are substitutes not to be despised.

However, notwithstanding the truth of all this, a man most certainly should travel if he can. Provided he does so with his eyes open, and in climates that are salubrious, he will be the better for it both in mind and body.

CHAPTER IX.

REASON.

STORING the mind with useful information, whether by travelling or by any other means, is commonly spoken of as storing the memory, and exercising the mind in remembering is commonly spoken of as exercising the memory. So again, exercising the mind in reasoning is spoken of as exercising the faculty of reasoning. And so, lastly, exercising the mind in imagining is commonly called exercising the faculty of imagination. Such language is convenient, and often necessary. At the same time it should be understood that remembering, reasoning, and imagining are not separate functions of separate mental faculties, regarded as separate mental organs or parts, but are separate functions of the mind itself viewed as an indivisible whole. As a man's hand may perform various different functions, so it is with the mind. The term "faculty" is misleading if it tends to obscure this fundamental psychological fact.

Nevertheless, I do not hesitate to speak of memory, reasoning, and imagination as mental faculties, for mental faculties they certainly are. They are not, however, to be conceived of as parts

of the mind, or as functions of parts of the mind. *The mental faculties are the mind itself*, and their functions of thinking, remembering, and so forth, are functions of the mind itself. Thus, when I say my memory recalls this or that, I mean that my mind does so ; and, of course, if it does so, it has the faculty for doing so. And so of the rest.

Having premised this, I would remark that all right systems of intellectual training have two main ends in view :—firstly to strengthen and develope by exercise the faculties of the mind (that is the mind itself) for the due fulfilment of their various functions of reasoning, remembering, and imagining ; and, secondly, to store the memory (that is the mind itself) with useful information. To this rule self-education is no exception. The improvement of the memory—that is, the developeing in the mind of the power, or faculty, or function of remembering—forms, as has already been intimated, a most important part of it. There are, however, other functions besides that of remembering that the mind should be strengthened and invigorated to perform, and at the head of these undoubtedly stands the exalted function of REASONING.

The principal intellectual functions with which education is concerned, and the cultivation of the mind for which it is the part of every right system of mental discipline mainly to aim at, may be said broadly to be three,—remembering, reasoning, and imagining. Mental education has thus three leading objects to pursue :—first, to strengthen the memory, and furnish it with useful information ; secondly, to develope the reasoning powers ; and, thirdly, to cultivate the imagination.

Of these three leading objects of education, that of the cultivation of the memory has already been treated of. The development of the reasoning faculty comes next to be discussed, and is a matter of supreme importance; for, unless subordinated to reason, our memories would often groundlessly torment us, our imaginations would deceive us, and our impulses would drive us to distraction.

The eccentricity and want of common sense occasionally to be met with in men of genius are not generally owing to any deficiency in them of the faculties of reasoning, memory, or imagination,—indeed, the latter two faculties they usually possess in redundancy,—but to the fact that *their memory and imagination, and especially their impulses, are often very far from being properly regulated by their reason.* Undoubtedly, the impulses of the mind,—its feelings, passions, or emotions, as they are variously termed, of terror, confidence, anger, pity, hope, joy, sorrow, love, hatred, pride, shame, sympathy, antipathy, and the rest,—should be subjected to educational training. They should be stimulated or thwarted, given the rein to or held in check, as the exigency of the moment may demand. Courage is a grand and manly principle, and one most highly to be applauded. Foolhardiness, on the other hand, is extremely reprehensible. At the bottom, nevertheless, of both of them the radical impulse is the same. In the former case, however, it is exercised rightly, and in the latter the reverse. And so with all impulses of the mind whatever. Judicious parents, therefore, school-instructors, and self-educators, should endeavour to habituate them at all times to act under due and intelligent control. Indeed, it is evident that,

necessary to our welfare as to educate our minds to remember and to reason is, it is no less necessary to our welfare to educate them to rule the emotions. In cases innumerable this is glaringly neglected. Hence the curious, but most common and somewhat absurd anomaly, of men whose intellectual culture has been of a high order being yet no better able to restrain their tempers than children are, or than is many a wild and untutored savage. Even philosophers, mathematicians, and men of letters, whom one might expect above others to be self-possessed, cannot always, when suddenly offended, curb the impetuosity of their tongues. Hence, again, why otherwise sensible persons, when they should retain the fullest command over their wits, are sometimes driven in a moment of panic to deeds of the most frenzied desperation. Whilst their reason has been trained in their youth and manhood to operate efficiently in other ways, it has too often been left the slave of their fluctuating emotions. The discipline, therefore, of the emotions, the impulses, the feelings, the appetites—call them which we will—ought, it is clear, to be regarded more than it usually is as an essential branch of general education, and most certainly as an indispensable branch of the education of self.

So much about the necessity of educating the impulses; or, more properly to express it, of educating the mind or the reason to rule them. No matter how strong and well developed a man's reason may be, if he does not constantly apply his mind to this particular work, he will be sure repeatedly to find that his impulses or appetites will lead him astray. If, however, he devotes his attention to this matter as he ought, then the

better trained and instructed is his intelligence, the more rationally in all respects will he guide his conduct. The cultivation of the reason is thus of incalculable importance. By what means is it best to be strengthened and improved? Of course, by being exercised. But by being exercised upon what? Why, upon all and any subjects that may happen to come to hand. In short, about matters innumerable we should accustom ourselves to think.

Now it is evident that to think at all we must have something in our minds to think about. Hence one reason why storing and cultivating the memory forms the chief part of early education. It would be a great mistake, however, on this account to regard the development of the reasoning powers as of minor moment. Indeed, so far from being so, the development of the faculty of reasoning, if not of superior importance, is, to say the least of it, as necessary as the cultivation of the memory.

Reasoning and remembering are clearly very distinct and different functions of the mind. Registering, for example, in the head the bare facts of history and geography, or learning by heart a number of lines of poetry, is not at all the same kind of mental operation as mastering the propositions of Euclid, or applying the rules of arithmetic, algebra, or grammar. The former especially taxes the memory, the latter thought. Every schoolboy's experience will corroborate this.

For strengthening and developing the reasoning powers, as has been already intimated, no better receipt can be given than their diligent use. Studying with zest and attention what may be called dry argumentative books on logic, meta-

physics, politics, ethics, or theology, is a fine mental discipline, and should on no account be neglected by any one who would train himself to think and reason soundly on profound subjects. He should do more, however, than this. He should not only master the arguments of others, but, as he does so, should reflect upon and question them. In short, he should think for himself, exercise his private judgment as a responsible being, and form his own opinions, on all or any matters whatever. To understand the line of thought with which he is presented in a printed book may require of him possibly a vigorous mental effort ; but still, for all that, he should remember that *in merely thinking in conformity with a book he is but running, so to speak, like a tram-car in a groove*, and is not thinking for himself at all. Original thoughts, whether worth anything or not, can only come from original thinking. A reader should not too easily and complacently take for granted that all the opinions which this or that writer advances must be true, and endorse them accordingly, but should stop occasionally to weigh them critically, and so make them a fulcrum for his own cogitations. One especial advantage to be gained from carefully perusing well-reasoned works, clever essays in magazines, or able articles in newspapers, which conflict violently with our own preconceived notions is this, that by provoking our mental antagonism they compel us, as we ought, to think for ourselves.

Similarly, smart conversation and spirited debating on disputed questions call into activity our powers of reasoning, and are excellent mental gymnastics to give briskness and vivacity to our

wits. They are calculated, however, if serious study is neglected, to produce flippant and opinionated chatterers, rather than wise controversialists whose utterances are worthy of attention.

Far too numerous is the herd of such
Who think too little, and who talk too much.



CHAPTER X.

IMAGINATION.

THE primary materials, so to express it, of whatever ideas we have in our heads come to us from without through the inlets of sensation. Thus Locke says, "*Nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu.*" If we were destitute of external senses, we should be as destitute of ideas as stocks or stones. Our ideas of things are mainly due, and our perceptions of things entirely due, to what our sensations of them are. We can perceive them only as our sensations determine. If our sensations were different from what they are—and why they should not be different nobody can say—we should have essentially different perceptions of things, and, of course, also essentially different ideas of things from what we have now. Nobody can tell why a sensation which affects us with a perception of colour, and presents us, as we are now constituted, with a perception of something that is green, red, or blue, as the case may be, should present us with the perception of a thing having this colour rather than another. It may be said, perhaps, that the rays of light are coloured, and that coloured objects are merely objects reflecting the coloured rays. True; but why do the rays of light which

reach our eyes from such objects affect them with a sense of colour at all? We cannot tell. Why we perceive things as we do is a profound mystery which no man can solve. All we can say is, that by the laws of our nature our perceptions are such as they are. They are very wonderful, and the more they are thought about the more wonderful they appear. This, however, is certain, that no ideas could exist in our minds without convenient processes of sensation. We could have no idea of pain if we had never previously experienced it, of colours if we had never previously seen them, or of sounds if we had never previously heard them. Thus our senses are the humble servants of the mind. They carry grist to the mind's mill, and stuff to the mind's loom, and leave it to the mind to work them up as it lists into shapes and conceptions innumerable. Whatever materials the mind has to operate upon are brought into it by their instrumentality. The mind no sooner receives these materials—these sensations—than at once, with the speed of lightning, it converts them into ideas, charging memory to preserve them carefully, and to produce them, when occasion calls for it, either to be reflected upon by the reasoning faculty, or to be rearranged, manipulated, and transformed, by the faculty of imagination. Of the memory and the reasoning faculty I have already treated. It remains for me now to discuss the faculty of IMAGINATION.

A most glorious faculty it is, and deserving of the utmost cultivation. The finest poetry is due to it, the grandest discoveries, and all that is most charming in history, science, and philosophy. All have it in some degree, though many only in a poor

degree. It is capable, however, of being strengthened and improved ; but, like other faculties, it can be improved only by diligent exercise.

Addison will have it that it is the sense of sight alone that furnishes the imagination with ideas to work upon. In this, unquestionably, he is wrong. Our ideas of sounds certainly come to us from hearing, our ideas of hard and soft from feeling, and our ideas of pleasing or unpleasing smells and tastes from our senses of smelling and tasting. In short, all our senses have to do with our ideas, and sometimes one idea is the complex result of the combined agency of several of the senses. However, that a vast number of our ideas are due principally to the sense of sight, there can be no doubt whatever. Indeed, for all ideas which are actually *imaged* by the mind, and which the imagination works up and transmutes, the sense of sight, if not the only, is certainly the main inlet. "We cannot," says Addison, "have a single image in the fancy that did not make its first entrance through the sight ; but we have the power of retaining, altering, and compounding those images which we have once received into all the varieties of picture and vision that are most agreeable to the imagination ; for by this faculty a man in a dungeon is capable of entertaining himself with scenes and landscapes more beautiful than any that can be found in the whole compass of nature."

Possibly Addison, when he wrote these words, may have had in his mind our Elstow hero, John Bunyan, who, as everybody knows, penned his famous allegory of the Pilgrim within the gloomy confines of a prison. If so, his omitting to

mention his name may be significant of the little esteem in which Bunyan was held in the days of Queen Anne by the class of readers who patronised the essays of Addison—reminding us of Cowper's couplet,—

I name thee not, lest so despised a name
Should move a sneer at thy deserved fame.

At any rate, whether this was the case or not, there is no lack of English people now who

Revere the man whose Pilgrim marks the road,
And guides the Progress of the soul to God.

By the verdict of everybody his imagination was of a high order. It played him, however, the most singular pranks. It is impossible to study thoughtfully his life and works—and in particular his own account of himself in "Grace Abounding"—without being struck with how strangely by turns it elevated and depressed him, now raising him to heaven, and anon sinking him to hell; at one time making him so miserable as to drive him almost to madness, at another filling his soul with raptures of ecstatic joy.

Why was this? Possessing a luxuriant imagination, was he wanting in intelligence? No one who has gone through his voluminous works—many of them able, argumentative, and full of thought—can suppose such a thing for a moment. His intelligence, undoubtedly, was far above that of the average people of his time—indeed, we may truly say, of the average people of any time. That he was a credulous believer in ghosts and goblins and old wives' fables, and that his fervid fancy made the most of them, we must candidly admit. What, however, is proved by this is, not

that Bunyan was unintelligent, for he was surely the very reverse, but that the most intelligent of men are creatures of their day, and are liable to go astray with their contemporaries. Such has been the case in all ages, and the tinker of Elstow was no exception to the rule.

People are apt to flatter themselves that because they have more knowledge than their forefathers they are therefore more intelligent. No mistake can be greater. A dwarf standing on the shoulders of a giant might as reasonably say that he was taller than the giant because he could see further. It is quite true that we see many things, and know many things, that our fathers and forefathers did not see and know ; but it does not therefore follow that we are more intelligent. Doubtless knowledge has been more widely diffused throughout the mass of human dulness, and the intelligence of mankind generally has been brought into more vigorous activity than was the case in former generations. Of course, therefore, it is quite possible that we may be more intelligent people than our forefathers—for intelligence, undoubtedly, is quickened and strengthened by being brought into energetic use. Supposing, however, that our forefathers exerted their intelligence as much as, and perhaps a great deal more than, we ourselves do, then it is quite possible that, although they may not have had a tithe of our knowledge, they may have been vastly our superiors in intelligence. Bunyan, unquestionably, had very much less knowledge on innumerable points than hundreds of stupid people now—the same might be said of Newton, Socrates, or Plato ; but who can say he had less

intelligence? We boast of our intellectual development. No genius, however, has yet appeared who is taller by a hair's breadth than the intellectual giants of the past. Few even have excelled in mental endowments so very humble a celebrity as Bunyan.

Had Bunyan lived in these nineteenth century days, he would have run, we may be sure, a very different career from what he did. He might have been equally imaginative, but assuredly he would have been less superstitious. He would never have felt, as he believed, Satan tugging at his coat-tails, nor have realised supernatural voices in the whispers of the wind. We might have had from him—rendered differently, no doubt, though not less ingeniously—a Pilgrim's Progress and a Holy War, but we should have had no Dorothy Mately with her tub and sieve being swallowed up for her sins by the avenging earth. We should have heard nothing, unless as a matter of pity and derision, of "one Freeman" being strapped to a bench in a tavern at Elstow and placed with a pan of burning coals under his mouth "to fetch the devil out of him."

Bunyan, with all his common sense and sturdy intelligence, was a believer in the most vulgar wonders. His too active imagination exaggerated them all. He realised things in heaven and things in hell, angels and devils, Paradise and the Lake of Fire, with an intense vividness of conception of which ordinary men were incapable. Indeed, to have endured, as he did, for a protracted period, the terribly dark and despairing thoughts that at one time beset his mind would have driven weaker mortals to distraction. All the infernal horrors which the rustics about him feared and forgot, he dwelt upon

long and often. During his early manhood they occurred to him by day, haunted him by night, and positively embittered his existence. The moral is obvious, and it is this, that the faculty of reasoning should be summoned into exercise to check the vagaries of the imagination. All increase of human knowledge has resulted from its use, and the most appalling follies from its neglect.

Bunyan, of course, could have reasoned well enough if he would. Indeed, from his own standpoint few men have reasoned better. His numerous treatises, as has been observed, are a sufficient evidence of this. But, then, on many things he never reasoned at all. So it is now with hundreds amongst us whose intelligence no one could dispute.

Prevalent superstitions, just because they are prevalent and believed in by everybody, it occurs to nobody to call in question. Thus it was with Bunyan. He accepted some of the most frightful fictions of human fancy as indubitable truths, and, instead of relegating them to be tried and tested in the court of his intelligence, he handed them over to his uberous imagination to colour, add to, and enlarge. The existence of goblins, for instance, which in his days was a common tenet of popular belief, he simply took for granted, and of what his imagination made of them we may form, perhaps, some faint conception from his lucubrations about demons in the "Pilgrim's Progress." Take, for example, his description of "that foul fiend the hideous, roaring Apollyon," with scales like a fish, wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, and mouth like a lion, breathing out fire and smoke. The whole world he viewed as more or less tenanted and roamed over by devils. In the Valley of the

Shadow of Death he saw "hobgoblins, satyrs, and dragons of the Pit," and in the midst of it "the mouth of Hell." "And ever and anon the flame and smoke would come out in such abundance with sparks and hideous voices," that the Pilgrim—and Bunyan himself was the Pilgrim*—had to betake himself to prayer. "Thus he went on a great while; yet still the flames would be reaching towards him. Also he heard doleful voices, and rushings to and fro, so that sometimes he thought he should be torn in pieces. Dreadful noises were heard by him for several miles together, and, coming to a place where he thought he heard a company of fiends coming forward to meet him, he stopped and began to muse what he had best do When he was come out over against the mouth of the Burning Pit, one of the wicked ones got behind him, stepped softly up to him, and whisperingly suggested to him many grievous blasphemies." Such experiences, represented literally in "Grace Abounding," and allegorically in the "Pilgrim's Progress," were really those of Bunyan himself. Indeed, a great part of his earlier life he compares to a road set with "snares, traps, gins, and nets," to effect the destruction of his soul. Thus he says,—

Dangers in darkness, devils, hell, and sin,
Did compass me while I this vale was in.

* Some have wondered why the Pilgrim is made to go through the Valley of the Shadow of Death in the midst of his Pilgrimage, and not at the end of it. "Grace Abounding" supplies an answer. It simply is that Bunyan in the midst of his days had had a strange apprehension of approaching death. He had been seriously ill, and *had imagined*, when he was so, that he was just about to

But enough of this. Plainly *the faculty of imagination must be held in subjection to the faculty of reasoning*, or it will surely dupe us—make us mistake fictions for facts, falsehoods for truth, and non-entities for things that are. The more luxuriant a man's fancy is, the more likely he naturally is to be deluded by its suggestions; and the more necessary, therefore, it is that he should submit them to the test of his intelligence.

But will not the wings of the imagination be sadly clipped if reason is to be allowed to control its flights? Will not the scope of its activity be contracted, and its movements grievously crippled? Not at all. It will not be injuriously affected in the very least, but will have as ample a sphere to expatiate in as ever. It will not be in the smallest degree less free to soar than before. The only difference in its condition will be this, that, whereas previously it was blind, it will now see; whereas previously it went wrong, it will now go right; whereas previously it beguiled us into error, it will materially help us to the discovery of truth.

Captain William Gill, of the Royal Engineers, in his interesting work, "The River of Golden Sand," attributes the stationary condition of the Chinese population through so many centuries to their being entirely destitute of the faculty of imagination. "Of all qualities," he truly says, "that conduce to the advancement of a people, imagination is perhaps the most important. Without it a nation must remain stagnant; with it the limits of its forward march can never be reached. No matter what branch of industry or science is

sink into his grave. Indeed, at one time he was in imminent risk of being carried off in a consumption. Thus, *Death's Shadow* had beclouded him.

examined, imagination lies at the root of its advance." He corroborates this assertion by pointing out that Newton by means of imagination realised the grand theory of gravitation, Darwin the descent of man, and that Professor Owen from the small fragment of a bone constructed the gigantic mammal it belonged to. The progress of art of all kinds is pre-minently due to it. The Chinese, Captain Gill believes, have been credited with numerous inventions which they never made. They are wonderful imitators; but of originality at present, however it may have been with them in bygone ages, they scarcely, he considers, show any evidence at all.

With all due deference to the authority of so intelligent an observer as Captain Gill, I believe it to be a complete mistake to suppose that the Chinese, or any other people whatever on the face of the earth, are entirely destitute of imagination. The Chinese, at any rate, are sufficiently imaginative to be extremely superstitious. Captain Gill, himself says, "They are very superstitious, and will readily believe anything that is told them." Indeed, although Captain Gill asserts that, "in the Chinese character originality and imagination are conspicuous by their absence," I am convinced that it is in consequence of the unchecked activity of their imaginations that they are as credulous as travellers describe them. Their knowledge being very defective, and their reasoning faculties not being brought to bear on the opinions suggested to their minds by themselves or others, their imaginations make fools of them, and fill them with the silliest delusions. They have faculties of imagining such as children have, faculties of

imitating such as children have, and faculties of reasoning such as children have, though they have the bodily dimensions of full-grown men. Mentally they are in a state of arrested development; and to this, and not to their having no imagination, is to be ascribed their stationary condition.

Every one knows that supposed truths are not always real truths. If a man's imagination takes hold of falsehood, and, in consequence of his ignorance or the dormant state of his reasoning faculty, palms it off upon his mind as indubitable truth, it may lead him seriously astray. And he may imbibe falsehoods of imagination from the very baldest prose and the most commonplace talk. Indeed, the very baldest prose and the most commonplace talk, strange as it may sound to say so, often contain more falsehoods of imagination than the most high-flown poetry, with this difference, however, that whereas what is said in poetry is usually meant to be understood as poetry, what is said in some dull and heavy homily, or in sober earnest in conversation, is invariably meant to be believed in as matter of fact, and is, therefore, if false and fallacious, all the more likely to be misleading to those who take on trust without reflection whatever they are told is true. If, for instance, a stupid fellow, pale with fright, were solemnly to declare that he had just seen a spectre in a churchyard, he would, of course, mean people to place faith in his testimony, and to receive his words in their literal acceptance. Nevertheless, his whole story, so far as having seen an actual spectre was concerned, would, from beginning to end, be purely a tale of imagination. Little as the holders of them may suppose it, many



prevailing and popular tenets are built upon no better a foundation. Like a successful utterer of base money, imagination has passed into currency a great number of false coins. It has been the creator of a multitude of fictions which have been accepted as genuine facts by gullible generations. That the world, for example, is destined sooner or later to come to an end may be true enough ; but surely, as all sensible people now see, the florid pictures which human imagination has repeatedly drawn of the final catastrophe are absolutely unworthy of a thought. And yet, age after age, they have scared millions, and driven hundreds mad ! So needful is it that the reasoning faculty should counteract the falsehoods of imagination.

It is surprising to what extraordinary misapprehensions and mistaken conclusions an unchecked imagination may lead. It would be all very well on a calm, star-lit night to look down a long avenue of poplar-trees and imagine them to be rows of giants ; but, if we really believed them to be so and ran away from them, we should be acting like simpletons indeed. And yet hosts of intelligent people, every day they live, are guilty of conduct quite as preposterously absurd—making the most hideous giants, not out of materials as substantial as poplar-trees, but verily out of just nothing at all. How many misunderstandings between man and man, how much jealousy between woman and woman, how much wrath at hypothetical slights, how much death and ruin, and misery insupportable, imagination alone is answerable for having conjured up ! When it thus befools us with deceptions, it is high time for reason to speak out.

The faculty of imagination, as has been already said, will not in any degree be weakened by being made amenable to reason and knowledge, but will only be hindered from deceiving us. It will still have as full a scope for its activity as before. It may contemplate still, if it pleases, the valleys vocal with birds as verily laughing and singing in the genial spring-time, and the little hills as rejoicing on every side. It may hear in the thunder the rolling of Jehovah's chariot-wheels, and behold in the clouds of evening, gilded by the rays of the setting sun, a mirage of the brilliancy of heaven. It may provide us with metaphors and similitudes, and picture to us, as the case may be, under the allegory of a tempestuous voyage or of a changeful journey, the course, from the cradle to the grave, of man's fitful and transitory existence. It will have ample room to give play to its sublime powers, and enable us in our dreams and reveries to see with our eyes shut fairer views than we ever saw with our eyes open. Nay, more, it will personify insensate objects, and endow them with all the attributes of life. Thus Wordsworth says,—

The poets, in their elegies and songs
Lamenting the departed, call the groves,
They call upon the hills and streams to mourn,
And senseless rocks: not idly; for they speak,
In these their invocations, with a voice
Obedient to the strong creative power
Of human passion.

He should have said, "of human fancy"; for it is, of course, human fancy or 'imagination that idealises things, and not the impulse of passion.

I say "fancy or imagination," for there is really no fundamental difference between them. Milton asserts in his "Paradise Lost" that "fancy forms imaginations"—making "fancy" the faculty, and "imaginings" the product of its action. He might, however, just as well have said that "imagination forms fancies." Indeed, fancying and imagining are expressions which, notwithstanding the distinctions, more fine than perceptible, that psychologists have drawn between them, may be used for the most part interchangeably in common language, though, as a matter of taste, the one expression in certain connexions is sometimes preferable to the other. Thus, fairies with their wands, magic palaces in the air, and Aladdins with their wonderful lamps, might with propriety be spoken of as pretty fancies; but the "Iliad" of Homer, or the "Divine Comedy" of Dante would more fitly be described as the creation of a grand imagination.

Imagination, as has been said, should be improved by being brought into play. If the reasoning faculty is well cultivated, and the memory stored with sufficient information, its exercise, which otherwise might often be detrimental to its possessor, will be to him entirely beneficial. Indeed, when kept under due control, its use to every one is enormously great. A man cannot give the simplest description from memory of anything that he has seen without calling his imagination into action; for what he describes is not really what he has seen, but what he believes he has seen. In short, he describes, not the identical thing itself—for it is not present before him at all, and, even if it were, he might possibly

mistake it for what it was not—but merely the conception or *image* of it which he may happen to have in his mind. He might fancy, on a dark night, that a tree was some huge and terrible monster, and might afterwards speak of it as being so ; or, on the other hand, if his reason checked his fancy as it ought, he might render of it a more veritable account. But, either way, it would be his own imagination from which he drew the picture. This sort of imagination every man has, and every man should endeavour to improve. A person endowed with a high degree of it would probably be able to give a lively relation of occurrences, and to pourtray beautiful or striking scenes in a graphic and pictorial manner. If he did not turn out to be a poet capable of depicting with Wordsworthian exactness the charming objects of nature, he would, at any rate, be likely to prove, if it were his fortune to be selected as a correspondent to a newspaper or as a contributor to a periodical, a most interesting narrator of minute and gossiping details.

The “visualising faculty” of Mr. Galton, which he defines as “the capacity of calling up at will a clear, steady, and complete image of any object that we have recently examined and studied,” belongs to imagination of this simply reproductive or non-creative kind, and undoubtedly, as he has convincingly shown, “admits of being largely developed by education.”* Many portrait-painters can take fairly correct likenesses from mere memory, and landscape-painters often depict on their canvas scenes which they have sketched in the barest outline. It is through exercising

* *Fortnightly Review*, September, 1880, p. 322.

their "visualising faculty" that they are enabled to do this. And so with those who describe interestingly in a letter, or in a book, or by word of mouth, things or places they have seen. For instance, to the mind's eye of Mr. O'Flanagan how accurately "visualised," so far as their general character is concerned, must have been the peculiar features of Limerick and its environs when he penned—evidently with off-hand facility—the following graphical account of them. "The situation of Limerick is very striking. On every side ranges of lofty mountains rise to shelter it, and the fertile district called the Golden Vein dips into the hills. The broad bosom of the lordly Shannon displays a series of lakes as it rolls on its way to the sea. It spreads into a noble estuary some miles below the city. Then the city itself, with its historic castles, its famed walls, its ancient town with its quaint old streets of gabled houses built after the style so common in old Flemish towns—the new portion of the city presenting so great a contrast to the old in its regular streets, its fine public buildings, its banks, churches, theatre, institutions—all excite the interest, the curiosity, and the admiration of the visitor."*

Creative imagination is imagination of a different description. Its elements are the same, namely, ideas of the mind, but it uses them in another way. It does not, as simple imagination does, merely reproduce ideas as they originated in actual perception, but works them up into conceptions which may be utterly unlike them. It imagines landscapes which its possessor never

* *The Munster Circuit*, p. 227.

really saw, sounds he never heard, cities he never entered, events he never witnessed, and people he never met. It is the imagination of every poet who is anything more than a mere descriptive delineator of matter-of-fact things and scenery; it is the imagination of every painter who is not a servile copyist, and of every sculptor who expresses the feelings and emotions of humanity in metal or marble. It is the imagination of the musical composer, of the allegorist, of the novelist, of the writer of romance. It is the imagination of the archæologist, of the geologist, of the astronomer, of the true historian—reflecting its light back on the occurrences of bygone time, and making them stand out in bold relief before the mental gaze. By means of it we can behold with Laplace the formation of worlds, and with Byron the repulsive death-scene of the Roman gladiator. It summons back to us Marathon and Miltiades, Waterloo and Wellington, Nelson and the Nile, with all their stirring accompaniments. It calls up from the grave of the past Socrates and Solon, Cicero and Cæsar, King Charles and Cromwell, to stand, as it were, visibly before us. It makes dead things live. No one but meagrely endowed with it could be a felicitous writer of history. He might prove himself an accurate annalist, or a respectable chronicler, but he would never compose a narrative which it would be an intellectual pleasure to peruse.

And here let me quote an apposite passage from an article by the Rev. George T. Stokes in the *Contemporary Review*.* “English history,” says this contributor, “as written a century ago, was very dry reading. History then on any subject

* June, 1880, p. 977.

was a mere chronicle. The historian was but an annalist. He dealt, not with living men and women with hearts and souls, with joys and sorrows, affecting and influencing one another from generation to generation, but with individuals as dead and lifeless as pawns on a chess-board. This century, however, has seen a vast revolution in this respect. Historians have learnt that they need imagination if they are to reproduce for us, not mere dry annals, but the life of the ages with which they deal. In every department of history has this spirit shown itself. Originating with Sir Walter Scott, it pervaded Macaulay, who taught men how English history might read like a romance."

That historical writing "on any subject" a century ago was dull and prosaic is true enough. Probably, however, Gibbon, though a little too stiff and stately for modern taste, will be regarded by those who admire him as an honourable exception to the assertion.

An accomplished writer of history or of novels necessarily calls his creative imagination into play, and strengthens and expands it by so doing. His readers, too, to appreciate his works, must exercise their imaginations likewise, or they will not be able to see, as they should see, with their mind's eyes, the people and incidents he portrays. A pleasing historian, however, or an interesting novelist, gives but little trouble to a reader. So graphically and easily does he write, that his readers require to put forth but little effort to picture to themselves his lucid descriptions. It is, however, the effort of imagining that improves the faculty of imagination. Thus, strange as it may seem to say so, a history written in a dry,

rigid, soulless style, if strictly accurate as to facts, though it might be anything but delightful to read, might be found as good a means of developing a reader's productive imagination as he could possibly resort to. If he would only take it up now and then as a piece of disagreeable task-work, and endeavour by an intellectual effort to make the dry bones it is composed of live, or, better still, if he would occasionally select a few pages of it, and try to rewrite them in a telling and pictorial form, he would do more to brace up and invigorate his capacity for mental creation than he would ever do by perusing for his pleasure and instruction literature of a more grateful sort.

The use of the faculty of imagination—of the faculty of vividly imagining things in the mind—to any one who would speak well in public, or even would have clear views in his head of what he has to talk about in common conversation, need not be insisted upon. In short, its service to everybody is so obvious, that its improvement should be neglected by none.

No sooner does an alumnus leave his school or college than he becomes, so to put it, his own schoolmaster, and continues such to the end of his life. It will have been seen from the preceding chapters that in fulfilling this vocation he has plenty to do. He ought to qualify himself more and more, as his years advance, to discharge with aptitude the special business or calling that it is his lot to pursue; to keep his body in a sound condition of health; to cultivate carefully the faculties of his mind; and to train himself generally in such a way as to fit him for acting his part in the world with credit and intelligence.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ART OF PUBLIC SPEAKING.

THE Art of Public Speaking will be briefly explained in this and some succeeding chapters. The late Dr. Channing once asserted that "*the power of utterance should be included by all in their plans of self-culture.*" I quite agree with him. To be able to make an effective address, whenever occasion calls for it, is so obviously useful to any one who would exercise an influence over the minds of others, that a concise exposition of the art of speaking will surely be regarded as appropriate in the present volume.

The ability to speak in public is, I suppose, more or less inherited in the case of every man who can speak at all. Is it, however, capable of being acquired? Undeniably it is, as instances innumerable combine to testify. Indeed, in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, if persons with a fair share of sense in their heads were only to set about its acquisition betimes, and with half the zeal which they devote to gaining proficiency in any other art, although they might not have it in them to become eloquent, they would turn out efficient speakers.

A really fine orator is, of course, an exceptional

phenomenon, but speakers—and by no means in different ones—are plentiful enough. Multitudes of them are to be found everywhere. Our platforms, law-courts, debating-clubs, and political meetings abound with them. Hundreds of them have very mediocre talents indeed, and are not a whit superior in mental powers to the thousands who listen to them. The chief difference between them and the run of people is simply this, that they, no matter how, have acquired the art of speaking, whilst the majority of others have not. However, assuredly, if they have been able to acquire it, others might do the same. Of this there can be no doubt at all.

Now one characteristic peculiarity to be observed in all men who have any pretensions whatever to be regarded as speakers is this, that they have a certain amount of confidence. Indeed, without this, even though they were the ablest of men, they would be powerless to speak at all. Timidity would overcome them, and they would fail irretrievably. This diffidence must be overcome—but how? Well, the question shall be answered by-and-by. Meanwhile, it may be stated that confidence, although a great thing for a speaker, is by no means the only thing, or anything like the only thing, that he will find needful; for it is plain that a man may be very confident—that is, may have no nervous timidity about him whatever—and yet, for all that, may have nothing in his mind to say. Or, again, he may have plenty to say, but may have no words on his lips in which to express his meaning. Thus we come to this, that, for a man to be able to speak, three things are absolutely required: some-

thing in his mind to say ; a sufficient command of words to enable him to express what he has to say ; and such an amount of confidence as will prevent his breaking down. These three requisites are essential to a speaker. Any man, however humdrum, can be a speaker who has them ; but no man, however cultured, can be a speaker who has them not. In short, a speaker must have THOUGHTS, WORDS, and CONFIDENCE. Without thoughts, evidently, he can say nothing, for he can have nothing to say. Who has not sometimes seen a stupid fellow in this awkward predicament when called upon unexpectedly to make a speech ? Again, without words at his command it is equally evident he can say nothing. And, lastly, without sufficient confidence to support him, it is obvious that he must fail. Manifestly, therefore, an absolute lack of any one of the above three requisites is a bar to a man's speaking at all.

And as there are three requisites for speaking, without possessing some share of which no man could be a speaker at all, so there are three main though not mutually exclusive classes of imperfect speakers,—those whose thoughts are defective, those whose words are defective, and those whose confidence is defective. If, for instance, a man's thoughts are poor, wishy-washy thoughts, then, however fluent his words and however great his confidence, he will say nothing that is worth listening to. How many speakers has one heard of this sort. Their defect lies, not in their insufficient command of words, or in their insufficient confidence, but in the utter vapidness and weakness of their thoughts. Again, another man will think too deliberately ever to be a ready speaker.

Philosophers, mathematicians, and logicians are sometimes men of this kind. Sir Isaac Newton, for example, and John Stuart Mill, both cut but a sorry figure of it in the House of Commons. Again, another man may have an ample supply of versatile thoughts, and no lack of confidence, and yet only be able to express himself with laboured slowness. His defect lies in an insufficient command of words. Another, again, has copious thoughts, and no lack of expressions in which to clothe them, but is in such a state of nervous trepidation, whenever he gets on his legs to speak, that his ideas evaporate, or become so confused and bewildered that he is apt to say what he did not mean to say, and to omit to say what he wanted to say. Great nervousness, until overcome, is bound to make a man fail, no matter what his intelligence may be; for it paralyses his thoughts, and thus, so to put it, cuts off the stream of his utterance at its very source. Speakers, however, of this kind, provided they are young and have the courage to persevere, are safe to improve. In time they will lose their excessive diffidence, and turn out, it may be, very able orators.

Such are the three classes of imperfect speakers, so far as their defects consist in their more or less pronounced deficiency in this one, that, or all three of the requisites spoken of above which are absolutely necessary, not only for good speaking, but for any speaking at all. For good speaking, of course, there is furthermore also required a good delivery. This will be spoken of in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

THOUGHTS, WORDS, AND CONFIDENCE.

IT will have been inferred from the previous chapter that, in order to be a speaker of any excellence, a man must necessarily have a command of such thoughts as he needs, of such words as he needs, and of such confidence as he needs. It is plain that in proportion as he has these three essentials at his service when occasion calls for them,—provided, of course, that at the same time he has sufficient clearness of voice and utterance to deliver properly what he has to say,—he will be an efficient speaker, and that in proportion as he has them not he will be defective. Thoughts, words, and confidence, to hand when required, are the three desiderata. How are they obtainable?

And first as to THOUGHTS,—that is, ideas to speak about,—how are they to be acquired? Why, as a rule they must be acquired—just as many other good things are to be acquired—by diligently collecting them. They must be got together, laid up in the storehouse of memory, and kept there so as to be available whenever they may be wanted for use. A retentive and well-stocked memory is of incalculable service to a speaker, and to furnish it adequately should be every one's endeavour.

A man possessed of a good memory, filled with the recollection of a miscellaneous multitude of facts, assuming that at the same time he has also words and confidence at his command, can usually speak offhand on a great variety of subjects. He is, therefore, often able, if called upon unexpectedly and on the spur of the moment for a speech, to acquit himself with credit, when others, in many respects his superiors, will perform their parts with comparative inaptitude. It depends upon his having a bank to draw upon, an armoury from whence he can get his weapons. Memory supplies him with ideas, and he at once translates them into words.

But is there no alternative but failure for those whose memories are less serviceable? We are treating, let it be understood, at present of speeches that are purely impromptu, that is, completely the product of the moment. However, very few speeches of any prolixity are really this. Most speakers give at least some small amount of previous thought to the subjects they speak upon. Of course, speeches of a merely trivial or complimentary description, or those made at small business meetings of a conversational kind, are frequently enough unpremeditated, and poor enough, too, they usually are. However, poor or not, those who deliver themselves best of such addresses are usually those whose memories, if not in any way remarkable, happen at any rate to be best furnished at the moment with such ideas as are wanted for the occasion.

Undoubtedly a retentive memory is of great advantage for impromptu speaking. However, *a commonplace memory will ordinarily suffice, pro-*

vided the person who owns it has vivacity of intelligence. A man may have an encyclopædic memory, but if he can only drag out his ideas, one after another, with lumbering slowness, he will probably prove, unless what he has to say is of extraordinary interest, more tiresome to listen to than agreeable.

Vivacity of intelligence—the power of brisk, spontaneous thought—is absolutely indispensable for good impromptu speaking. It is necessary with the best of memories, and will make up, in no small degree, for the defectiveness of the worst. It is partly a natural gift; but partly also it is acquired,—and may be acquired, too, in very considerable perfection by almost any average man who will set about its acquisition betimes. It depends on the mind's being capable of passing swiftly from one idea, subject, or train of thought to another, and also on its being able to make the particular ideas which it has prominently before it at the moment call up other ideas into its field of vision in as quick succession as may be needed. It is, undoubtedly, as has been said, to a great extent a capacity to be acquired. And it can be acquired only by bringing into lively play the faculty of rapidly transferring the attention from one thing or subject to another. There can, of course, be no thought without attention. A man must attend to what he thinks about, or he cannot think about anything at all. But he may be so absorbed in thinking about one thing as to be unable hastily to transfer his thoughts to another. Such a man may be a deep thinker, but he will not be a ready one; and, if not a ready thinker, he will still less be a ready speaker.

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Indeed, for impromptu speaking, and yet more for impromptu debating, he will be peculiarly unfitted. A ready, vivacious thinker—not by any means necessarily a profound one, and possibly quite the reverse—usually becomes so, not so much because he has been endowed by nature with a better memory or greater intellectual ability than other people, as because—owing, it may be, to the circumstances amidst which he has been placed—he has been obliged to keep his mind more than usually on the alert. He has had, perhaps, constantly to turn his thoughts with rapidity from one thing to another—first to give his full attention to this thing, and then anon to that. Thus his power of varied attention is in good working order, and, though he may be utterly incapable of profound thought on any one single subject, he will yet be of quick intelligence, which, in the case of any individual whatever, consists essentially in the power he possesses of rapidly concentrating his intelligent attention on fresh things. Some people when you talk to them seem, so to put it, to be scarcely awake. Their wits seem slumbering. You speak to them, but they do not instantaneously catch your sense. They surprise you perhaps by saying No when they ought to have said Yes, and Yes when they ought to have said No. In fact, your words have gone in at their one ear and out at the other, and, whilst appearing to listen, they have hardly heeded you at all. Why is this? Assuming that the meaning of what you have said to them is plain and obvious enough for any ordinary person to perceive, the reason must be, either that they are stupid, or that their minds at the

moment are abstracted. They are wool-gathering, perhaps, thinking of other things, and are so absorbed in various meditations of their own, that, whilst stopping to hear you, as good manners require, they miss the drift of your remarks.

Men of profound thought may thus be very far indeed from being men of quickness or versatility of intelligence. Can they acquire it? As has been already intimated, they surely, to a great extent, can. By persistently endeavouring, as occasion calls for it, to keep his wits awake, and to devote his undivided attention for the moment to whatever before him is worth attending to at all, any man of average capacity who gives his mind to it, may gain much of that readiness of intelligence which is essential to readiness of speech.

Bacon asserts in one of his well-known essays that "conference maketh a ready man." If by "conference" we understand him to mean "conversation," the truth is exactly the other way. Ready men make conversation, not conversation ready men. Ready men are clearly the cause, and conference or conversation is as clearly the effect. Men with no minds could hold no conversation, and with no ready minds could hold no ready conversation. Readiness of mind does not come, as Bacon states, from conference, but, as has been explained above, from exercising the mind in acts of rapid attention. It is not, therefore, really conference, but the exercise of brisk attention required in conference, that "maketh a ready man." Bacon probably meant this. Anyhow, the singular value of conference, debate, or conversation, as a means of stimulating attention

into activity, and so quickening by exercise the mind's readiness, will be disputed by none.

Barristers and short-hand reporters have about as good a preliminary training for impromptu speaking as can well be, and are usually as ready with their tongues as any men existing. They are not merely under the necessity of cultivating—which is a great point—a rapid and intelligent attention of the mind to varied things, but especially of cultivating it in reference to spoken words as they listen to them in arguments or debate. They thus not only increase the briskness of their faculty of attention, but at the same time gain that command of language which is essential to fluency of speech. Start them on some impromptu topic, and the chances are that they will be equal to the occasion—that appropriate ideas will occur to them at the moment, and flow from their lips in apt and manifold expressions. There is little probability of their being at a loss for thoughts. Even if they were, the very objects in the room before them would come to their help, and suggest suitable conceptions to their minds. Now the consciousness that they are thus ready at any time with thoughts, and with words in which to utter them, is peculiarly calculated to inspire them with the third chief requisite for speaking, namely, sufficient confidence. Hence it comes to pass that most of them are the reverse of diffident, and that they usually shine conspicuously in offhand oratory.

Impromptu speeches are commonly but flimsy productions. They are frequently delivered on occasions that are merely convivial, and on subjects of a trifling kind. Undoubtedly they

are sometimes made at meetings summoned for the despatch of urgent business or the discussion of serious questions. Still, as a rule, from the simple fact that they are impromptu, although they may be speeches on matters of importance, they are not important speeches.

Some men will talk glibly on almost anything—upon subjects even about which they know little or nothing, or at least about which they have acquired but meagre information. It should never be forgotten, however, that the value of a man's words can no more exceed the value of his knowledge and intelligence than a stream in its onflow can transcend the level of its source. Impromptu orators, if they are not possessed of a due share of knowledge and good sense, are only too likely, when they essay to speak, to deliver themselves of such worthless platitudes and commonplace stuff as few could listen to with patience.

An ordinarily sensible man ought to be able to make an ordinarily sensible impromptu speech whenever occasion fitly calls for it. I say, "whenever occasion fitly calls for it," since it would be extremely undesirable for any man, even if he could do so readily, to speak impromptu on all occasions. Fit occasions for his speaking are by no means always fit occasions for his speaking impromptu. On the contrary, there are numerous occasions when speeches certainly ought not to be impromptu, but should be carefully and specially prepared for beforehand. Although a speaker may be well able to make sensible and effective remarks on the spur of the moment on almost anything, it does not follow

that, when he has ample opportunity for previous preparation, and with previous preparation could make a much better speech, he would not be guilty of a great mistake to content himself with uttering an absolutely unpremeditated effusion. Indeed, it stands to reason that if, as there can be no doubt, a man can speak better on what he knows thoroughly than on what he is only acquainted with superficially, there must necessarily be innumerable occasions of speaking for which special preparation should be made.

I remember the case of a clergyman in Devonshire—and no doubt there have been other such cases elsewhere—who used frequently to preach, not only extemporaneously, but impromptu. A text would strike him in the course of the service, as he read the lessons or the epistle or gospel for the day, and after that, without any further preparation whatever, he would get up into the pulpit and dilate upon it. He commonly acquitted himself well, since he happened to have quick wits, a retentive memory, and an ample store of information. The practice, however, is by no means to be generally recommended to divines. The subjects of so-called extemporaneous sermonsought unquestionably, as a rule, to have been well previously deliberated. Indeed, to dispense altogether with such previous deliberation, even occasionally only, very few amongst them are qualified. And similarly with secular lectures and with speeches on controverted points—they should have been well thought about beforehand. Words—at least for the most part—may be left to come at the moment, but ideas and arguments should have been concatenated before.

Every speech, then, as we have seen, even though impromptu, must have thoughts for its foundation. But to convey thoughts to other people's minds we need words for their expression. How, then, are we to get words? In short, how is fluency of language to be acquired? The answer is plain. *Fluency of language depends on a fluent intelligence combined with a familiarity with the use of words.* Any man who can think quickly and continuously on any subject, and whose vocabulary is copious and ready to hand when required, supposing him to have no physical impediments of speech, possesses all that is essential for fluency. To gain fluency, then, is nothing more or less than, firstly, to acquire by exercise the power of thinking fluently, in contradistinction to thinking slowly and profoundly, which, however good as a training for the mind, does not conduce to fluency of speech; and, secondly, to acquire by exercise the further power of expressing thoughts in words as rapidly as may be needed. The only way for a man to sharpen his wits is to use his wits, and the only way to master language is to use language. The singularly little use of their mother-tongue that the majority of people make is remarkable. They talk enough, many of them, no doubt. But still, for all that, out of the vast multitude of words of which their exquisite mother-tongue is composed, they habitually use but a very small number. It is impossible to say with even approximate exactness of how many words the English language consists. Thousands of its words are mere terms of art, or trade, or science, and never come into general use at all, and no dictionary, however copious its vocabulary, contains anything like the



whole of them. According to Max Müller some fifty thousand words may be taken as sufficiently representing the contemporary language of England. Todd's edition of Johnson's "Dictionary" comprises fifty-eight thousand words, and the new edition of Ogilvie's "Imperial Dictionary" as many as a hundred and thirty thousand. The ordinary vocabulary, however, of a well-educated citizen rarely exceeds three or four thousand words, or that of many an illiterate person more than three or four hundred! And moreover, too, the small number of words that people use they generally blurt out in the merest dribblets. They will greet you with a Good Morning or a Good Night; or say Yes or No when you put to them a question; or inform you curtly, when the sky is serene, that it is fine weather, or when it is actually raining that it is wet; but it is not their usual custom when they meet you to make you a long address. Indeed, you would very naturally be inclined to shun them if it were. One inevitable result, however, of people's using language so little as they do—uttering just a few jerked-out words at a time, and no more,—is that many of them never become anything like thoroughly acquainted with their own mother-tongue. It is really, to a great extent, very unfamiliar to them. Thinking only in snatches, and speaking only in snatches, it is no wonder that they have little fluency; for fluent, continuous speech requires for its basis fluent, continuous thought. If a man does not think with fluency and continuity, he cannot speak with fluency and continuity. His speech may be less fluent than his thoughts, but it cannot possibly be more so. Fluency

of thought, then, is a *sine-quâ-non* of fluent speaking.

It is sometimes said, when a man makes some extravagant and preposterous assertion, that his words outrun his thoughts. This, however, is impossible. *A man's words can no more outrun his thoughts than a railway train with an engine in front of it can outrun the engine.* His words can only be what his thoughts make them—what the state of his mind determines them to be. Of course, there is a well-understood sense in which it is perfectly true that a man's words and thoughts disagree, as when he tells falsehoods—says one thing and believes another. This is not disputed. What is contended is, that a man's state of mind invariably determines his words. If he deliberately tells falsehoods, it is because he has a mind to do so. Thus his words and his mind, instead of disagreeing, tally entirely with one another. His lying words are but the outcome of his lying mind. If, again, his mind is true, his words will be true; and, if his mind is clear, his words will convey clear impressions to all who are capable of understanding them. But, on the other hand, if his mind is hazy and confused, if his thoughts are all in a state of jumble and disorder, his words and arguments will surely be so too. If a speaker at any time delivers himself of a lot of nonsensical rhodomontade which his calm reflection would repudiate, it is not because his words outrun his thoughts, but because his thoughts are in a medley altogether.

Fluent speech can only come, as has been said, from fluent thinking. It may be very light, very trifling, very silly thinking, but fluent it must be,

if fluent speaking is to be the result of it. Men, in general, don't think fluently at all, but, as it were, by starts and stoppings. Their thoughts are not like a stream of limpid water flowing on continuously for some distance, but like jets of water squirted out fitfully from a syringe. The first and chief essential for fluent and continuous speaking is fluent and continuous thinking; and the second, a command of language for its due expression.

Men for the most part think habitually in words, and always, of course, when speaking or writing, express their thoughts in words. Hence their words have a tendency to become as fluent as their thoughts. More fluent, however, than their thoughts, as has been already remarked, they can never become. Generally they are a great deal less so. Thus it happens very often that a man will have thoughts in his head for the utterance of which he is unable at the moment to hit upon the words he wants.

A greater readiness of language is what he needs to remedy his defect, and this he can only gain by the more familiar use of it. He may have thoroughly learnt a foreign tongue; but, if he has little or no opportunity of using it in conversation, he will never speak it as fluently as his own, which he daily employs. And, as to his own, the less he uses it, the less he will have it at his command. A vast number of people, partly, perhaps, through defect of verbal memory, but chiefly from the small use that they make of their own mother-tongue, are really, as has already been observed, wonderfully unfamiliar with it. Even scholars and philosophers, whose reading has been extensive and whose vocabulary may consequently be ex-

pected to be more than ordinarily copious, are often singularly unfluent in speech,—not that they want an abundant stock of words, but that, from want of a familiar use of them, they do not come trippingly to their tongues. Let a man's vocabulary, however, be ever so copious, and his words ever so ready to come to his tongue when thoughts come into his head, still the stubborn fact remains, that, if thoughts don't come into his head, words won't come to his tongue. Words corresponding to thoughts can only, of course, come out of his lips as fast as thoughts come into his head. Thus fluency of thought is an absolutely necessary preliminary for fluent speaking. Even scholars and philosophers, as has been already intimated, often stumble in their speaking from lack of a colloquial familiarity with words; but what is more remarkable still—and what people in general would scarcely have expected in the case of such learned men—is that they fail too, and that repeatedly, from lack of fluency of thought. Many of them think slowly, lumberingly, ponderingly,—albeit, let it be taken for granted, soundly and logically enough,—on the numerous deep and intricate subjects to which their studies are directed, hardly ever exercising themselves in rapidly flowing thought at all. The consequence is that, from their want of the habit of fluent thinking, they have no capability for fluent speaking; for, as was observed just now, without fluent thinking there can be no fluent speaking. Indeed, *lack of fluent thoughts is a more fatal obstacle—a much more fatal obstacle—to eloquence than a defective vocabulary.* An unlettered country bumpkin, with the scanty stock of commonplace words at his command that he daily



uses, if he has but fluent thoughts, will be able to speak fluently in his homely dialect on many and many a subject about which those whose vocabularies are redundant, but whose thoughts come sluggishly, could say nothing whatever with any ease or readiness at all.

Thus, whether a man's vocabulary be defective or redundant, fluency of thought is an absolutely essential requisite to him for fluent speaking. Of course, the more words he has at his service, the better will the language be in which he will be able to express himself. Hence he should make himself as familiar as possible with the words, and with the practical employment of the words, of his own mother-tongue. Reading, conversing, and penning down his thoughts in writing will contribute much towards making him this. Reading will enlarge his vocabulary, and conversation and writing will habituate him to the use of it. But, let it again be repeated, if he were possessed of the completest vocabulary in the world, without having fluency of thought, he could no more be fluent in speech than a fine musical instrument could produce fine music in the hands of an incompetent performer. A copious vocabulary is a grand instrument of eloquence in the hands of a fluent thinker, and, indeed, will go far to constitute him a finished orator; but in the hands of one whose thoughts travel on crutches it is often well-nigh useless.

What is wanted is *familiarity with words, combined with fluency of thought*. How a familiarity with words may be gained has been stated above; but what about fluency of thought? Well, it can, of course, be acquired only by the exercise of thought,

—not, however, at all necessarily by the exercise of deep thought, of thought on subjects requiring severe mental application, but simply by the exercise of thought, whether wise and profound, or silly and superficial, in a flowing, rapid, running-on sort of way.

Now, no man's thoughts flow with equal rapidity at all times or on all subjects. They do not flow rapidly, for instance, but quite the reverse, when he is thinking out with difficulty an intricate and complex problem. When, however, he has mastered the problem, the case is different. For example, previously to preparation a man is unable to speak fluently on an abstruse subject at all. Why? Not necessarily because the subject is abstruse, but more probably because his notions about it are in such a state of mud that he can give no intelligible account of it. The first requisite, then, for fluent thought, and therefore for fluent speaking on such a subject as this, is a clear conception of it. Clear conceptions, however, of intricate subjects do not usually come spontaneously, but are generally formed only after a great deal of tedious preliminary thinking. When, however, a man by this means has once become thoroughly acquainted with his subject, when once he has got his ideas about it in good order, then, but not before, is he in a proper position to explain

The thoughts of a lecturer when he is preparing in his study a dissertation on some obscure controverted question, if he does not happen to have in his head a thoroughly lucid view of the subject, he is unable to say, will sometimes move very rapidly indeed. When, however, he has once got his ideas in good order and arranged ideas of his subject, he



can write about it, or speak about it fluently enough. His thoughts flow readily, and words in abundance come at his command.

It is plain, then, that in order to be able to think, write, or speak rapidly, fluently, and continuously on any subject, it is *especially important to have clear ideas.*

Clearly, defined and well-arranged ideas are a prolific source of thoughts for fluent utterance. No one can speak without ideas, and no one can speak accurately without accurate ideas. And especially are such ideas needed when a speaker is required to speak accurately and coherently on a subject for any considerable duration of time. With his ideas all in confusion he cannot possibly do this; but, with his ideas in order, words at his command, and sufficient confidence, he can do it easily enough.

I have heard it said that some men are such wonderfully clever speakers, that they can speak fluently upon subjects of which they know absolutely nothing. Clever, indeed, must they be if they can do that. The statement, however, is, of course, hyperbolic; for, evidently, on a subject of which a man had absolutely no knowledge, no ideas, no conception, he could have no thoughts to express, and therefore no words to utter.

There are, however, undoubtedly, men enough in the world who speak about things of which, if they do not know absolutely nothing, they yet know so uncommonly little, that the best advice that could be given them would be to sit still and hold their tongues, since, if they get up and open their mouths, they can but display their ignorance. At any rate, if they venture to speak, and would

not willingly incur the imputation of folly, it behoves them studiously to confine themselves within the scanty compass of their knowledge, and not to go one step beyond it. By adopting this course, though they will manifest, it may be, the smallness of their information, they will, nevertheless, prove themselves wise enough to avoid the silliness of vapouring loquaciously about matters of which they have no sufficient understanding.

What is essentially necessary for intelligent speaking is, as has been said, to have clear ideas. Without them a man may possibly be fluent, but cannot possibly be lucid.

But was it not said just now that without clear ideas a man could not be fluent at all? Not exactly. It was said that they are of especial importance as a means to fluent speaking; but it was not said that there could be no fluent speaking without them, though that there could be no speaking without them that did not contain more sound than sense is obvious enough. On many and many a subject—political, social, religious, or scientific—popular spouters, who have hardly given the thing a serious thought, will sometimes be heard to dilate. Let it, however, distinctly be perceived that, voluble though their tongues may be, and sonorous their language, so far as they run on without having any clear and well-defined notions of what they are talking about, they do but deliver themselves of vague and incoherent rubbish. *People can only speak in proportion as they have ideas, and can speak lucidly only in proportion as they have lucid ideas.* Those who seem to speak fluently on subjects about which they have no

clear ideas do not really speak fluently on such subjects at all, but on hazy impressions of their own—impressions often so exceedingly wide of the mark that they have nothing to do with it whatever. To talk fluently, and at the same time to the point, is the thing to be aimed at, and that can only be done by keeping a clear conception in one's head of what the point is.

Especially is this true in the case of lengthy effusions, such as lectures, political speeches, or extemporaneous sermons. The plan they are to be constructed upon, and the ideas to be evolved and expressed in the course of their delivery, should be as perspicuous as daylight to the speaker's intelligence before he essays to address his audience. He should have a clear view and a thorough grasp of his subject, and take good care, during the process of expounding it, that he keeps a firm hold on the invisible thread of thought which should run through and connect the various parts of his discourse.

Hundreds of sermons, speeches, and popular lectures are well-nigh worthless—perhaps entirely so—simply from their vagueness. Their language is good, it may be, and their style faultless; but there is nothing in them—nothing that any one can carry away. They are all pulp and flabbiness, so to put it; have no backbone in them, no strength, but are poor and feeble, if not fatuous and imbecile. People hear them, but are none the better for them, none the wiser. They afford them no mental nourishment, no solid instruction. The luckless listeners, hungering for information, depart just as empty as they came. Where lies the remedy? Why, of course, with the speakers.

They are fluent, be it supposed—babble on without hitch or impediment. But what are they driving at? Probably they do not exactly know. And, if they do not know, certainly nobody else can know. If water in a reservoir is muddy, only muddy water can flow from it. If the ideas in a man's head are misty, misty also must be the ideas which are represented by his words. So essentially requisite for lucid speaking are lucid ideas—a clear conception of what is to be enlarged upon and explained. How is it to be got? I answer, it is to be got by looking at a subject all round, by hearing opinions about it, or, if necessary, by reading about it and carefully studying it so as to have all needful knowledge and information concerning it. In short, it must be got by such intelligent attention to it, and by such an amount of mental reflection upon it beforehand, as may be required for a sufficient acquaintance with it. In a word, it must be got by thinking. The necessary process of thought may be long or it may be short, difficult or easy, according as the subject is intricate or not. However, be it which it may, previous thinking is the only method of gaining clear ideas. Speaking won't bring them. Indeed, if it did, it would bring them too late—for, of course, a man should have them in his head before venturing upon speaking at all. "Write, write, write," some teachers of oratory say. Now I have no objection whatever to writing—quite the contrary; but still I am sure of this, that *clear ideas don't come in the very smallest degree from the mechanical exercise of writing*, but simply and solely from the mental operation of thinking. So far as

writing involves the thinking out of a subject to be spoken upon, it is useful as a means of clearing a man's thoughts concerning it. So far, however, as it does not involve that mental process, it is, for this particular purpose, of no use at all. Using words in writing, as using words in speaking, may be conducive to fluency, inasmuch as it gives a man a practical familiarity with his mother-tongue; but something else is needed for lucid thinking, and consequently for lucid speaking and lucid writing, and that is a preliminary exercise of thought.

Undoubtedly, without antecedent thought—at least without some antecedent mental activity, though it might not amount to what is commonly called thought—no man could utter a word in the form either of speech or writing. However, of course, what is here meant by a preliminary exercise of thought is an exercise of thought previously to, and not actually at, the time of speaking or writing.

When a man is dreaming, and talks in his sleep, ideas must have come into his head before words could have come out of his mouth. But, his ideas being incoherent, his words are incoherent likewise. And so with speakers and writers whose utterances are a mass of confusion—they afford a sure evidence that their mental images are disordered, and their thoughts in a jumble. Although they may be wide awake, they closely resemble dreamers.

If men can think when they dream—and there can be no doubt about it, otherwise they would not dream—much more can they, and do they, think when they speak. But because they can,

and do, think whilst they speak—and some from force of habit and natural disposition can think whilst they speak much better than others, though, of course they cannot think profoundly, for to be speaking rapidly and at the same time to be thinking deliberately is impossible—there is no reason whatever why, when they have opportunity for doing so, they should not think before they speak, and give time, attention, and study to what they are going to speak about. Indeed, in many cases it is absolutely necessary to do so.

And similarly with writing. Men undoubtedly can, and do, think as they write ; but if they have to write on any subject with rapid fluency, and withal sensibly and coherently, it is absolutely necessary, in many cases, that they should have studied and thought it out beforehand. They cannot, it is clear, write or speak at all upon any subject of which they know absolutely nothing ; but to write or speak properly, even upon a subject of which they know a great deal, they often require to have spent a very considerable amount of time previously in so arranging their ideas and arguments as to be able to express themselves in a luminous and fluent manner.

Especially, of course, is this the case if the subject they have to speak or write about is intricate or profound ; for, although people often can, and do, think fluently, and at the same time speak or write with rapidity, they cannot possibly, as has been observed, speak, nor can they write, with rapidity, and at the same time be thinking deeply. *Rapid speaking and rapid writing may be the result of profound thought, but of profound previous thought, not of any profound thought at*



the moment of speaking or writing. A man, doubtless, may think profoundly as he writes, if he ponders as he goes, and stops altogether at intervals for calm reflection; but he cannot possibly think in this way when he is in the act of making a speech—for even the most solemnly slow-paced speech would be altogether incompatible with the severe and tardy process of laborious meditation. An intolerably deliberate speaker would not be listened to. However, even such a speaker, endowed though he might be with abnormal intelligence, could not, whilst speaking, think profoundly. It comes, then, to this, that if a man is required to speak or write with rapidity, and at the same time sensibly and to the point, on a profound and difficult subject, it is absolutely necessary that he should have devoted his mind to it beforehand. And what is absolutely necessary in such a case as this is advisable in innumerable others. Indeed, all speeches of any considerable length, in which method and lucidity are required, should have been the result of careful preparation.

A man should, if possible, have a lucid conception in his head of what he means to say before he rises to make even the most trivial speech. I say “if possible,” for it is scarcely always possible in the case of impromptu effusions. However, even if he is called upon suddenly, and without any previous thought and preparation, to make a speech, he should endeavour—and, supposing him to have any quickness of intelligence in him, he will generally have ample time for it—during the brief moment which is antecedent to his opening his mouth, just to collect his thoughts together,

and to catch hold of an appropriate idea or two to serve as the groundwork of his remarks.

A lucid conception of what to say is the main desideratum in all speaking—even in impromptu speaking and hurried debating. It is, however, an especially important desideratum for a speaker who has to deliver himself of a lengthy, formal, methodical kind of address—of such an address, for example, as used in former days to be called “an oration”—on some definite and particular theme; for, in this case, in order to have a lucid conception of what to say, he must not only have a lucid conception of, and a sufficient familiarity with, his subject, but must also have a lucid conception of how to enlarge upon it and explain it. He must not only have an adequate acquaintance with his theme, but also a distinct notion of how to treat it—a clear mental view of the exact order in which his various topics and arguments are to be advanced. In short, the scheme of his speech—the plan it is to proceed upon, its several heads and divisions—should be as plain as daylight to his mind.

How is he to get it so? By writing it down on paper, some teachers of oratory will say. Very good advice, no doubt. However, before he can write it down on paper he must have got it in his head. Evidently, then, the first step to be taken in making an outline for a speech is a process of thought. Most certainly, a speaker, before he can have a plan for his discourse, must mentally have conceived it. Having conceived it, or any part of it, he can write it down, but not before. In short, it is plain that the plan or outline of any speech whatever is entirely a product of reflection,

and not in any degree of the mechanical process of writing.

But should it not be written down? Well, that depends on circumstances. If very complex, it ought to be; but, if very simple, it need not be, as then, without its being written down at all, a man's unaided memory is easily able to retain it. To have a plan or outline present to the mind is the main point. To have a written outline on paper is of no value whatever, except so far as it conduces to this. If a speaker has a clear outline or plan in his head, and can keep it there, then whether he has it on paper or not is, of course, utterly immaterial.

But, whether on paper or not on paper, a scheme, outline, plan, form, or skeleton—call it which you please—a man, of course, must necessarily have before he can either sit down and write off, or stand up and speak off, a formal and lengthy speech. It should be planned before it is delivered, much as a house should be planned before it is built. Clergymen, in writing off original sermons, essayists, in penning essays, parliamentary orators, in addressing their constituents, and lecturers, in uttering their so-called extemporaneous diatribes, find an outline in their heads of no less importance to them than a compass to a ship at sea. Without it, they would often be stranded in confusion, and absolutely unable to keep their course at all.

Hence speakers and extempore preachers sometimes find a few significant *catchwords* scribbled down on a slip of paper—to hold in their hands whilst speaking, and to look at, if required—of essential service to them. Robertson, of Brighton,

was accustomed to go into the pulpit with a slip of paper in his hand, though he, generally, soon crumpled it up, and had but little need of it. Robert Hall, too, sometimes found notes a help to him. And so with Jay, of Bath. His jottings, however, were of the briefest description. When once asked if he was in the habit of preaching from notes, he replied, "From catchwords on a slip of paper ; but I wish that I had never used them, for the memory is like a true friend—it loves to be trusted."

A clergyman well known to me preaches habitually without note or manuscript. He used invariably at one time to take with him into the pulpit a slip of paper with a few words penned down upon it to aid his memory. However, he informed me that he found by experience that this only hampered him, and that he could do better without it. Speakers, of course, in such a matter as this should act as suits them best. Certainly a few notes or catchwords may be advisable for beginners, or for those who, from defect of memory or from being liable to be confused in the presence of an audience, are apt to forget topics on which they should dilate. Like corks, however, for boys learning to swim, whenever they can be, they are best dispensed with altogether.

We have now seen that before a man delivers extemporaneously, or sits down to write off rapidly from his own thoughts, a lecture, discourse, or speech of a prolix and formal kind, he must needs have—either only in his head, or sketched down also on a slip of paper, if he requires it—a scheme, outline, or plan to speak or write upon. The question that next occurs is this, Is it not neces-

sary that an extemporaneous speech of the description we have been speaking of should not only have an outline or plan in accordance with which it should be spoken, but also that it should have been composed and written out in full on paper before it is delivered? I answer, Certainly not. Of course, any lecture, discourse, or speech which has to be read from a manuscript, or recited from memory, must obviously have been written out in full on paper previously to being delivered. No speech, however, which, so far as its words are concerned, is extemporaneous, need have been written out previously at all.

But, if not necessary in all cases, is it not advisable in some cases that a speech abounding in details requiring special accuracy of statement should have been previously written out in full? I reply, Not at all, if, so far as its words are concerned, it is to be delivered extemporaneously. An accurate scheme in the head, or on a slip of paper to prompt the head, is all that is needed for an extempore speech. Of course, if the speech is not to be delivered extemporaneously—and some speeches are undoubtedly of a kind to be unfit for extemporaneous delivery—the case is different. Then it is not only desirable, but absolutely necessary, that it should have been composed and written out in full beforehand. Such speeches, or “papers” as they are sometimes called, are common at meetings of learned societies, and at scientific conferences. They are carefully precomposed by their authors, and at the time of their delivery read off from the leaves of their manuscripts. A written discourse has this also to recommend it, that it may be used, if required, or

future occasions, when one that is unwritten will be forgotten.

Of course, a speech that has been composed and written out need not necessarily be read out when delivered, but may be learnt and spoken off from memory. Now, reading speeches, in certain cases, has much to be said for it, but *speaking memoriter*, as it is called—that is, composing a speech or an address on paper, and afterwards delivering it word for word by heart—very little. Indeed, I regard it, for the most part, as an extremely unadvisable practice. In the first place, it should be remembered that speaking memoriter is not speaking extempore at all. It is true it may seem like it if well performed, though at best it is but an imperfect imitation of it. Undeniably, a memoriter speaker speaks without a manuscript just as an extemporaneous speaker does ; but still, for all that, he no more speaks extemporaneously than a schoolboy does when he recites his lessons in school. *A man who adopts memoriter speaking, with the idea that by doing so he is fitting himself for speaking extemporaneously, will ere long find himself mistaken.* Memoriter speaking may have its use, no doubt, but certainly not as an exercise for acquiring the ability to speak extemporaneously. Those who wish to learn to speak extemporaneously had best have as little to do with it as possible.

If a speech is to be spoken memoriter, it ought to be learnt with a thoroughness which in many cases demands a considerable degree of labour. Even then, however, it may prove a failure. Hundreds have learnt their speeches by heart, and learnt them thoroughly, and yet—alas for them !—

when facing their audience have become dumb-founded, and have forgotten every word they had prepared. They had far better not have learnt their speeches at all. It is an utter waste of time for a man to learn a speech, unless he can be pretty sure of retaining his presence of mind at the time of speaking it. And to do that—especially if he is a novice—it is above everything incumbent upon him to have learnt it thoroughly. Indeed, for any man—no matter how practised he may be in memoriter speaking—to be able to speak off fluently and without hesitation a speech or lecture or sermon that he has learnt by heart, he should have learnt it so thoroughly well by heart that at the time of speaking it he should be under no necessity whatever of using any mental efforts to remember it. If he has learnt his speech in any degree imperfectly, and has at the time of speaking it to be taxing his memory to recall its forgotten words, he will be pretty sure, in the course of delivering it, to find himself seriously embarrassed. He must by all means, if he can, retain his presence of mind, for if he once loses that it will be all up with him. If, however, he can only keep himself sufficiently collected to be free from paralysing nervousness he may yet get himself right. He is unable, we will suppose, to remember the exact words he intended to use, and is vainly ransacking his brains in his futile efforts to recover them. He is confused and disconcerted, and is on the point of coming to a standstill. What should he do to enable him to go on? Why, this he should do. He should immediately give up hunting any longer in perplexity after lost words, and concentrate his mind solely on his subject. If he has

that—as in all cases he ought to have it—clearly arranged in his head, then, although his language may not be precisely what he purposed, in all probability words will be forthcoming, and he will acquit himself fairly to the end.

It cannot be too strongly insisted on that a speech to be spoken memoriter should have been so thoroughly got by heart that the mind will recall it without effort during the process of speaking it. Macaulay learnt his most brilliant orations by heart. Such a practice, however, if frequently adopted by speakers, would be found immensely laborious. Indeed, to ordinary mortals, not gifted with the facility of remembering that Macaulay possessed, it would be simply intolerable. It has, too, other objections. A man speaking memoriter cannot, like an extemporaneous speaker, feel, as it were, the pulse of his audience, and vary his diction to suit their requirements, but must go on like a wound-up automaton. Cicero and Demosthenes used frequently to learn by heart the most telling parts of their orations. Doubtless, the beginnings and endings of speeches, and passages to be quoted in the course of them, may often with advantage be learnt by heart—provided they are so effectually learnt by heart that they will flow readily from the speaker's lips at the time of speaking. So far, perhaps, memoriter speaking may be commended. As, however, it is a kind of speaking totally unadapted for everyday use, nor is of the slightest advantage as an exercise for acquiring the power of extemporaneous utterance, it is unnecessary to dwell upon it longer.

Speeches or discourses of whatever sort that are to be read off from a manuscript or recited from

memory must, evidently enough, have been written out previously to their utterance ; but not at all necessarily so with speeches, even of the most elaborate description, that are to be delivered extemporaneously. Their plan, of course, should be clear to the speaker's mind, but their words may be left entirely to come spontaneously at the time of speaking. O'Connell's greatest speeches, although carefully premeditated, were never composed beforehand. Nor were those of Burke. Nor, again, were the eloquent addresses of Lacordaire. The last named, we are told by Montalembert, "was a real extempore speaker. He prepared his discourses by short but intense labour, and did not write them." Charles Simeon's practice was of a like kind. "I do not write my sermons before preaching," he once said, "but on the day after they are preached!" Cobden, similarly, stated in a letter to Mr. Delane, "I am not in the habit of writing a word beforehand of what I speak in public." The Right Honourable John Bright, again, is not in the habit of writing out his speeches before delivery. "I have never," he wrote in a letter to a student which appeared some years ago in the *Evangelical Magazine*—"I have never been in the habit of writing out my speeches—certainly not for more than thirty years past. The labour of writing is bad enough, and the labour of committing to memory would be intolerable, and speeches read to a meeting are not likely to be received with much favour. It is enough to think over what is to be said, and to form an outline in a few brief notes. But first of all a real knowledge of the subject to be spoken of is required. With that, practice should make

speaking easy." And so in most cases it does. It was signally so, for instance, with Bishop Wilberforce. "I make it a rule," he once said, "to be *saturated* with my subject." And he was right. Sense can no more emanate from brains that are empty than water can be squeezed out of a dry sponge.

It were unnecessary to produce further evidence in support of the very obvious fact that *not a single word of even the most eloquent speeches that were ever spoken need have been penned down on paper previously*. Still, teachers of oratory in all ages have insisted so much on the practice of writing that it must surely be of some decided use in the training of would-be orators. And so, undoubtedly, it is. It is useful as a means of acquiring fluency, and it is useful also as a means of testing it. A man's opportunities for public speaking are often comparatively few; but his opportunities for writing, if he chooses to avail himself of them, are usually many. Of course, as an exercise for gaining fluency, and for testing fluency, there can be no better exercise than actually speaking; but, failing occasions for that, writing, unquestionably, is a most excellent substitute. Being, too, a slower operation than that of speaking, a man may be pretty sure that if he cannot pen down his sentiments respecting familiar subjects with tolerable facility on paper, he is hardly likely to be able to acquit himself satisfactorily in the more rapid procedure of speaking. If, however, he can write fluently, the chances are that the capability is in him of speaking fluently as well.

The practice of writing—in other words, of prose composition, whether in the shape of letters,

essays, or what not—has this, further, to be said for it, that, if it is not so effective a means of acquiring fluency as actually speaking is, it is a far better means of improving style. Now *a good style, undoubtedly, is one of the most pleasing ornaments of oratory.* It must be adapted to the subject, and suited to the people addressed. It does not at all necessarily consist of fine and elaborated language. On the contrary, a simple style is often the very best. But, whatever it be, it should be lucid ; for what is the use of speaking at all if your audience cannot comprehend you ? Hence Quintilian's dictum, "*Prima sit virtus perspicuitas.*" A speaker, he insists, should endeavour by all means in his power to make his language such that a listener may not only understand him, but be utterly unable to mistake his meaning. "*Non ut intelligere possit, sed ne omnino possit non intelligere, curandum.*"

A man may undoubtedly learn something of what a good style is from hearing good speaking; but he may learn much more of what it is from good reading—from being a diligent reader of the best books, newspapers, and periodicals of his time and country that may happen to come in his way. No better method can be adopted than this for acquiring a taste for a good style. A man cannot hear speeches—much less good speeches—every day ; but no day need pass over his head without his devoting some portion of it to good reading. When he has once thus got to know what good literature is, and can appreciate the charms of it, such flashy and pretentious verbiage as speakers of sham refinement are prone to affect will become as abhorrent to his taste as discord to the ears of a musician.

The late Dean Alford, in his "Queen's English," has a good deal to say on this point. "Our journals," writes the dean, with a touch of exaggeration, "seem determined to banish our Saxon words altogether. You never read in them of a *man*, or a *woman*, or a *child*. A man is an *individual*, or a *person*, or a *party*; a woman is a *female*; a child is a *juvenile*; and children *en masse* are expressed by that most odious term *the rising generation*." The dean gives many more examples of a like kind, and then adds the following bit of advice: "Be simple, be unaffected, be honest in your speaking and writing. Never use a long word where a short one will do. Call a spade a spade, not a *well-known oblong instrument of manual industry*; let home be *home*, not a *residence*; a place a *place*, not a *locality*. And so of the rest. Elegance of language may not be in the power of all of us, but simplicity and straightforwardness are. Write much as you would speak; speak as you think. If with your inferiors, speak no coarser than usual; if with your superiors, no finer."

That Saxon words should invariably be chosen for speech or conversation in preference to words of Greek or Latin derivation is not, I presume, the dean's meaning, but that pretentious verbiage should be avoided, and such words only generally employed as are in common and familiar use, whether of Greek or Latin origin or not; for, of course, there are hundreds of words of Greek or Latin origin in the English language which are universally current, and quite as intelligible to everybody as words that are purely Saxon. The plain rule to be attended to is this—to use such

words as suit us best, no matter whether Saxon or not, provided that to the minds of the persons we address they express our meaning clearly.

To have acquired by listening to good conversation, by occasionally hearing good speeches, and, especially and pre-eminently, by reading good literature, a thorough appreciation of what a good style of language is, if it is not a guarantee—as it, unfortunately, is not—that we shall be able, when we either speak or write our thoughts, to employ a good style of language ourselves, will yet most certainly prevent us from being guilty of such vulgarities of phraseology as those which have been indicated by the dean. It may not ensure us the mastery of a good style, but it will preserve us, at any rate, in no inconsiderable degree, from the faults which constitute a bad one.

Many teachers of oratory and elocution have recommended *the practice of translating into one's own language passages from foreign works* as an excellent method both of improving style and of acquiring fluency. Now, as to the practice of translating conducing to improve style, it no doubt gives a man a command of apposite and varied expressions. Of course, however, before a man can either write or translate in a good style of language at all, he must necessarily have come to know—at least to some small extent—what a good style of language is. Such knowledge must be a preceding acquisition, and it is to be acquired, as has been explained above, from hearing good speaking, joining in good conversation, and especially from reading good literature. It is reading, and hearing sentiments well expressed in speech or conversation, and not either writing or

translating that gives a man a knowledge of what a good style is.

Again, as to translating conducing to fluency—it gives, no doubt, a command of words which is an important factor of fluency of speech; but fluency of thought is what is first wanted. That, most certainly, translating is incapable of imparting; for it should be borne in mind that in translating from a foreign tongue into our own we are employing words to express somebody else's ideas, whereas, in writing down our thoughts, or in speaking extemporaneously, we are employing words to express our own. The mental operations involved in the two cases are essentially different. A ready translator of a foreigner's ideas, even if he possessed sufficient confidence to enable him to speak, might, for lack of ideas of his own, be an utterly incapable speaker; whereas, on the other hand, a man who writes ideas of his own, and writes them fluently, will be sure, if he is possessed of confidence, and has no physical impediment to his utterance, to be a ready speaker. But although, as has been said, neither writing nor translating can teach a man what a good style is, they both afford him a ready means of testing his style when he has written down his words on paper. Such defects in it as he can then perceive himself, or can have pointed out to him by a competent instructor, he should forthwith rectify, and avoid on future occasions. It is in this way that writing or translating is conducive to improvement of style.

But valuable as the practice of translating undoubtedly is as a criterion of style, and, as a means, as just explained, of improving it, it never-

theless has not the value that writing has of being also a test of fluency of thought, without which no man by any possibility can be a fluent speaker. For translating, as has been remarked, a man requires words to express the thoughts of somebody else, but for writing his own thoughts, as for speaking his own thoughts, he requires words to express thoughts of his own. Thus writing—that is the exercise of composition, and especially of rapid composition—is evidently better than translating, if not as a means of improving style and acquiring a command of language, at any rate as a means of cultivating such fluency of thought as is essential to ready utterance. Translating, at best, is but a test of our command of words, but writing is also a gauge of our command of thoughts, of their fluency, their accuracy, their lucidity, and so forth. Viewed in this light, we can easily understand why Cicero, Quintilian, and teachers of oratory in all ages, have insisted on writing as an exercise of special importance.

Enough has now been said about THOUGHTS and WORDS. It remains for us next to consider CONFIDENCE—the last, but by no means the least, important requisite for public speaking. Indeed, I am not at all sure that it is not the most important requisite of all; for, with confidence, even a fool can speak, whilst a wise man without it will be dumb. Of course the fool can deliver himself only of folly. But never mind that. What it concerns us here to notice is—that he can speak; whereas, destitute of confidence altogether, if a man had the wit of a Sheridan or a Sydney Smith, he would be unable to open his lips.

It may possibly be said that fools are confident

because they are fools, but it does not hold good invariably that wise men are diffident because they are wise ; for, for a man to be diffident when he ought reasonably to be confident, whatever else it may be, is certainly no symptom of his wisdom. If he has his subject well in hand, and words at his command to describe it—and whether he has this or not, as has been shown above, he need not be long in doubt—surely, instead of being so overcome with timidity when he is called upon to speak that his thoughts get scattered, his words go, and he cannot say his say at all, he ought, on the contrary, to be emboldened by the consciousness of power, and to be as calm and collected as is meet. Why is he not so? Why, when he rises to address a company of very harmless human beings, does he tremble with agitation, and grow pale with terror, as if he were being stared at by hungry wolves, or confronted by bulls of Bashan? Well may we ask—why? There is, of course, no good reason for it at all. It is to be accounted for solely by the fact that men's emotions are often stronger than their understandings. It is so always with people in a panic, and it is so frequently with unpractised speakers. Their presence of mind, which it behoves them especially to retain, forsakes them just when they most require it. They cannot think, and consequently cannot speak. This irrational diffidence should be conquered ; and conquered it can be, in almost all cases, by any man of common sense who will resolutely determine to resist it. And the sooner he begins the better. Indeed, it has been said that “if ever a child is to speak well, it ought to begin as soon as it has the use of its tongue.”

Confidence, though more or less a constitutional trait, is undoubtedly capable of being acquired. Indeed, it may be acquired—though sometimes, it is true, only with difficulty—by men of average intelligence at almost any period of their lives. It is best, however, to acquire it early. Nothing imparts it more surely than a consciousness of fluency. Hence, for endowing them with fluency, and with the confidence which the possession of fluency inspires, Mr. Halcombe recommends that the head boys in public schools “should be continually called upon to address the school for ten minutes or longer on some general or historical subject.” He advises that at first simple anecdotes or narratives should be chosen, and, afterwards, more difficult subjects as their powers expand. Sir Robert Peel, when a boy, was made by his father to go through a discipline of this sort. And so with Pitt. Whitefield, again, was but a schoolboy at Gloucester when he began to teach as an evangelist.

It is needless to produce further examples in proof of the obvious fact that fluency and the confidence it gives are most surely to be gained by early practice. Still, that they may both be acquired in later life is undoubtedly true. As to fluency, whether a man has it or not he may in a great degree discover, by the test of writing; but whether he has confidence or not—whether he has boldness enough in him or not—to stand up and address an assembled audience, he can only discover by actually attempting it.* If,

* Clearly fluency *in esse* for writing must indicate, with but few exceptions, fluency *in posse* for speaking. The *posse* becomes *esse* as diffidence is subdued.

however, he can reasonably satisfy himself that he has thoughts and words at his command, he ought also reasonably to possess a sufficient amount of confidence to enable him to speak whenever occasion requires.

When the eloquent divine, Robert South, essayed for the first and last time in his life to preach extempore he was in such a state of nervous trepidation that he lost his head, and could hardly utter a word. Almost all he could do was to ejaculate, in wild desperation, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" and then came down from the pulpit, crestfallen and disappointed, and never from that day forward attempted to preach extempore again. In this he was wrong, to say the least of it, for the power undoubtedly was in him. Alarm in his case was altogether irrational and absurd. Had he but formed the determination to persevere he would have succeeded to a certainty. Wiser far was Mr. Haweis, incumbent of St. James's, Marylebone, who, finding that reading his sermons did not fill his church, took to preaching extempore. His first attempt, he candidly confesses, was so lame and clumsy a performance that his friends entreated him in future to read his sermons as before. He declined, however, to follow their advice, conquered his hesitation, and became afterwards, what he is now, a master of ready delivery.

If confidence may enable even a fool to speak, and diffidence will strike even a wise man dumb, then, of course, confidence is a quality of supreme importance to a speaker. Let it, however, be a sober and unobtrusive confidence—a confidence in his strength combined with a due sense of his

shortcomings, a confidence devoid of bumptiousness, and free from all semblance of conceit. Want of modesty in a speaker is a grave defect. Whilst fools think their utterances infallible, and themselves perfection, running on with

The rattling tongue of saucy and audacious eloquence, wiser men are humble, and treat their hearers with respect.

That confidence for speaking is capable of being acquired has been sufficiently shown. It is not, however, only for speaking that it is needful, but for the competent performance of ten thousand other actions. Without it we could neither walk, nor ride, nor climb, nor swim. Let but a horseman, when run away with, lose his nerve, and woe betide him ! Let but a tight-rope dancer be seized with alarm, when going through his manœuvres, and he will risk a downfall. Let but a groundless panic pervade the finest army, and it will be doomed to inevitable defeat. Let the hand of the most skilful practitioner tremble in the midst of a critical operation, and it may be at the cost of his patient's life. So valuable is confidence. As, however, it can be acquired for innumerable deeds of valour and dexterity, so can it be acquired for speaking by almost any one who will take the necessary pains.

The wise and active conquer difficulties
By daring to attempt them ; sloth and folly
Shiver and shrink at sight of toil and hazard,
And make the impossibility they fear.

CHAPTER XIII.

DELIVERY.

HAVING THOUGHTS, WORDS, and CONFIDENCE, a man may safely essay to speak. But it does not follow that he will speak well. No ; to ensure his doing that A GOOD DELIVERY is required. Without it the ablest speeches will be marred, but with it even the most commonplace utterances—provided always that they are received as true or convincing by those who listen to them—will be often astonishingly effective. I say, “provided they are received as true or convincing by those who listen to them,” since it is an undoubted fact that the impression, or no impression, that a speech makes on an audience depends on the state of mind of the listener quite as much as upon the eloquence of the speaker. Arguments that are convincing to one are often the reverse of convincing to another, and statements which are credited by this man will be rejected as falsehoods by that. If a speaker had the finest delivery in the world his words would fall flat on the ears of listeners who regarded his assertions as claptrap. Speakers therefore should beware how, in contending for this cause or that, they maintain such extravagant opinions as can

only be repudiated by men of sense. It is a pity, for instance, to hear declaimers on platforms so denouncing Popery as only to render themselves ridiculous. Let them expose it by all means, but never let them imagine that they can destroy the genuine thing by smashing a dummy of their own making. As to Protestantism, again, let it have its due. It was a grand movement, and has accomplished wonders ; but still, for all that, it is not, as I once heard a pompous orator proclaim, "the sole originating source of modern enlightenment." That Protestantism has favoured the growth of knowledge I admit ; but I am equally sure that growing knowledge preceded Protestantism, and was a principal cause of its production.

It has been said that commonplace utterances, provided they are received as true by those who hear them, and therefore calculated to carry conviction to their minds, will often be rendered wonderfully effective by a good delivery. If any one doubts this let him examine the discourses of Whitefield. Of what poor, wild stuff were they mostly composed ! And yet everyone has heard of their extraordinary influence. To what was it owing ? Why, in the first place, to the fact that the poor people he preached to thoroughly drank in his words, and took for gospel everything he said ; and secondly, and especially, to the fact that his addresses were uttered with such a beauty of voice, such appealing looks, and such an intensity of fervour, as endued them with a power which they would not otherwise have possessed.

And the same may be said in a minor degree of the sermons of Wesley. Their success was cer-

tainly far more due to their author's delivery than to any peculiar wisdom they contained.

Such being the effect of a good delivery, its importance to a speaker is undeniable, and he should spare no pains to acquire it. If he happens to be gifted with a *pleasing personal appearance* so much the better. It is a letter of commendation which he carries on his brow, and may be seen and read by all men. Wesley possessed it, and so pre-eminently did Whitefield. But a felicitous delivery to a speaker is far more needful than this. Earl Russell had by no means a fine exterior—indeed, just the very reverse. Lord Brougham was almost ugly. And yet by their oratory they could hold their listeners spell-bound. Delivery with them was the main thing. Intonation, gesture, pathos, energy—such are the accompaniments that give force and vitality to words.

Mankind are impressed by the manner of a speaker quite as much as by the matter of his speech. He should be thoroughly unaffected, quiet or animated, solemn or jocose, just as his subject needs, and no more. Hardly any better advice could be given him in a small compass than that which is contained in the oft-quoted directions of Hamlet to the players, "*Suit the action to the word, the word to the action*, with this special observance—that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature." If platform orators remembered this, and never ranted and gesticulated to excess, they would speak to much greater advantage.

Action is to be commended, but then it must be action that is fitting. To see a man, when there is no reason for it, constantly thumping the air with his clenched fist, or moving his arm perpendicularly

up and down like the handle of a pump, all through a long and tedious diatribe, is irritating in the extreme. No action at all is better than such action as this.

Preachers occasionally err in the opposite direction—especially those who read their sermons from a manuscript—and are egregiously dull and prosy. Standing in their pulpits as motionless as mummies, speaking in a drawling monotone, and scarcely ever lifting up their eyes to look their people in the face, what wonder if they sometimes find that

The clear harangue, and cold as it is clear,
Falls soporific on the listless ear?

Action that is varied and appropriate is a most serviceable adjunct to a speech. It often illustrates a speaker's meaning in a remarkable degree, adds force to his words, and, what is more noteworthy still, positively rouses and elicits his intelligence. Indeed, if a man is free from nervous diffidence, the mere presence of a large audience quickens his wits surprisingly. Cobden confesses as much as this when he says, in reference to a speech which he had delivered at Rochdale, "None but the public speaker knows with what velocity thoughts move when in the presence of four thousand listeners." Thus you will sometimes find men who in common conversation are slow of utterance, and in literary composition by no means brilliant, who yet, when speaking extemporaneously at excited meetings, will acquit themselves with a degree of eloquence which you might have supposed to have been utterly beyond them. The reason is that, whilst thus speaking in public, they become subject to a mental stimulation which makes them more

than usually awake, so that their thoughts and their words come to them with a promptitude which they do not generally command.

This is a reflection, perhaps, from which those who fancy that oratory is for them an impossible accomplishment may derive encouragement. Let them only get confidence on their side, and then, may be, in the presence of a sympathising, or of a violently antagonistic audience, acting upon their minds as an instigating spur, they will speak with a readiness of which they would have thought themselves incapable.

It is a good plan, for the most part, in extemporaneous delivery to *begin slowly*. Even experienced speakers are apt to be a little flurried on first rising, and inexperienced speakers a great deal more so. Attention to this rule gives them time to collect themselves. Many of the best speakers speak slowly from the beginning of their speeches to the end. O'Connell always did so. A slowly-spoken speech, if in sufficiently colloquial language, is of course easiest for an uneducated audience to comprehend; but, still, an uniform slowness of utterance throughout a long address is hardly advisable. If his words are plain, and his hearers can sufficiently catch their meaning, a speaker should from time to time alter his rate of diction. It produces variety, and is consequently more pleasing. Much of the charm of Bishop Wilberforce's eloquence was owing to his adoption of this habit. As a skiff at sea is wafted onwards by fluctuating breezes, so a good speaker is now slow, now fast, as his subject requires, and as his thoughts at the moment travel.

One word *respecting the voice*. "*Vox ultra vires*

urgenda non est," says Quintilian, and he says rightly; for if the voice is strained beyond its natural power it is rendered exceedingly jarring and disagreeable. It loses any normal sweetness that it may possess, and becomes converted into a husky, grating, unmelodious noise. Of course, a speaker should be audible—there can be no doubt about that. When, therefore, there is occasion for it he should open his mouth and speak out boldly; but he should never rave. Great loudness is by no means generally necessary for speakers. If they have but average lung-power, and can articulate with clearness, they can be heard much more easily than they suppose. I was strikingly impressed with the truth of this when listening some time ago to a long speech from a lady. She certainly had no remarkable strength of voice; but she spoke so slowly, and with such peculiar distinctness, that, although I happened to be standing at the distance of the whole length of a large and densely-crowded public hall away from her, I did not lose a single syllable that she uttered.

Similarly, Bishop Lonsdale, although his voice was gentle, could make himself easily heard in a vast assembly. "No one would have guessed," says his biographer, "that that soft and pleasant voice, which was no louder than any other in a room, would swell in a great building into a tone which sounded harsh and plaintive for a moment, but presently carried every one along with it by its surprising clearness and fulness, never rising into a shout, and never sinking into indistinctness, even of a syllable—and this in places where other preachers shouted and laboured in vain through half their sentences."

There should be *spirit in delivery*. Speakers lose immensely by a frigid manner. Although their language may be faultless, and their arguments measured and precise, they enkindle no sympathetic feelings in the breasts of their listeners if they display no energy themselves. Their unmoved audience seems to say to them upbraidingly—

'Tis not enough that what you say is true :
To make us feel it *you* must feel it too.
Show yourself warm, and that will warmth impart
To every hearer's sympathising heart.

Good plain common-sense should be spoken with animation, but without any approach to affectation. A pretentious finery of articulation is detestable. Quintilian calls it "odious," and Cowper, the poet, denounces it in yet stronger terms. He declares—

In my soul I hate
All affectation. 'Tis my perfect scorn,
Object of my implacable disgust.

Distinctness of articulation, of course, should be cultivated. Without it a man could not express himself with propriety in common conversation, and still less could he make himself intelligible in a large assembly. At the same time an over-scrupulous preciseness in pro-noun-cing e-ve-ry lit-tle syl-la-ble should be shunned as not only needless but pedantic. Words, it should be remembered, have emphatic syllables in them, much as sentences have emphatic words. Emphasis, therefore, should be given only to those syllables, as only to those words, to which emphasis properly belongs. All the syllables of most words will be

expressed, no doubt, by a competent elocutionist, but certainly not all with equal forcibility.

Three concluding rules respecting delivery are worthy of attention. In the first place, take care never so to lower the voice towards the end of a sentence that, whilst the former part of it is plainly heard, the latter part of it becomes nearly, or entirely, inaudible. Secondly, take care whilst speaking to breathe as much as possible through the nostrils. Those who always breathe, whilst speaking, through their mouths, instead of speaking in a smooth and continuous flow, speak in an intermittent gasping sort of way, which not only wastes their energies much more than is required, but mars the effect of their addresses. Lastly, never be afraid of well opening the mouth. Speaking with closed teeth is a decidedly objectionable habit even in private conversation. It so muffles the voice and stifles its tones that in public speaking it is manifestly a grave defect.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN EPILOGUE.

I HAVE not thought it necessary in the foregoing succinct exposition of the art of speaking to make any remarks upon the composition of PERORATIONS and EXORDIA. After all that has been said about them by writers on oratory, the exordium of a speech—no matter how high-flown and elaborated it may be—is merely its opening, and the peroration is simply its conclusion. The object of the former is properly to introduce the subject, and of the latter effectively to wind it up by pressing home summarily and forcibly on an audience arguments which have gone before. Whether a speaker acquits himself well or not in these two particulars depends on his own taste and judgment far more than on any rules that could be given for his guidance.

And here, before leaving the subject of oratory, I will offer a few further words of exhortation and encouragement to such of my readers as may need them. That the art of speaking is worthy of being cultivated no reasonable man will deny. Those who have failed to acquire it in their youth have again and again regretted it. When, for example, General Grant, ex-President of the United States,

was presented at the Guildhall—in a very neat speech by the City Chamberlain, whose eloquent fluency he must have envied—with the honorary freedom of the City of London, he began his reply by saying, “It is a matter of some regret to me that I have never cultivated that art of public speaking which might have enabled me to express in suitable terms my gratitude for the compliment which has been paid to my countrymen and myself on this occasion.” Could he have had his time to go over again we may easily believe that he would have had no cause whatever to have made this honest avowal, but would have gained proficiency in an accomplishment which is so invaluable to public men.

Dr. Channing says, in an address on Self-Culture,—“Our power over others lies not so much in the amount of thought within us as in the power of bringing it out. A man of more than ordinary intellectual vigour may, for want of expression, be a cypher without significance in society. And not only does a man influence others, but he greatly aids his own intellect by giving distinct and forcible utterance to his thoughts.” Locke’s testimony is to the same effect. “There is nothing,” he says, in his Treatise on Education, “more becoming a gentleman, nor more useful in all the occurrences of life, than to be able on any occasion to speak well and to the purpose.” It is a fine exercise both for mind and body. It quickens the intellectual faculties, and brings the lungs into vigorous play. Moreover, too, it commands a power which, if worthily used, is excellent.

The art of speaking, however, like every other art, is not to be learnt by the mere study of the

theory of it, but by its actual practice. A young clergyman once asked his bishop how he should learn to preach extempore. "Why, learn it by doing it," was the bishop's terse reply. Of course certain common-sense rules must be attended to—such rules, I mean, as have been insisted on in the foregoing pages. If, for instance, any one were to rise to address an audience, having nothing to speak to them about, he would be foolish indeed. Clearly then he must obey such preliminary precepts as those which have been explained in the preceding chapters. It is all very well to say that he should learn to speak by doing it. So he ought. But then, evidently, before he can do it, he must have some few thoughts and words at his bidding to do it with. And he must have, too, to enable him to do it, a sufficient amount of confidence. Indeed, as has already been remarked, without confidence there is nothing in the world that a man can do properly at all. Too much, therefore, cannot be said on the importance of acquiring it.

It is curious how greatly often a man's power to do a thing depends on his belief that he can do it; and how greatly, on the other hand, his inability to do a thing depends on his belief that he cannot do it. The belief that he cannot do it may be quite unreasonable, but nevertheless, so long as he firmly entertains it, he will, surely enough, be unable to do it at all. The belief that he can do a thing does not, of course, insure his being able to do it, for the belief may be simply absurd; but the belief that he cannot do it will be certain to paralyse him completely. The belief that he can do a thing, if he really can do it, will guarantee

his doing it when occasion requires ; but the belief that he cannot do it—even though he could do it easily enough if he only effectually tried—will render him as powerless as a baby.

Many of the phenomena of what has been named Electro-Biology, or Mesmerism, are to be ascribed to the fact that the mind of the person operated upon is brought, for the time being, into such a state of subjection to the operator's will that he will believe whatever he tells him. Any one who has witnessed so-called biological exhibitions must have been struck with this astonishing fact. He will believe that water is wine, that coffee is vinegar, or that a puppy-dog is a wolf ! Let the operator place him on a bench or on a stool, and assure him that he cannot rise from it, and then, struggle as he may to rise from it, he will be utterly powerless to do so. "I have seen," says Dr. W. B. Carpenter, "a strong man chained down to his chair, prevented from stepping over a stick on the floor, or obliged to remain almost doubled upon himself in a stooping position, by the assurance that he could not move. On the other hand," he continues, "an extraordinary power may be called forth in any set of muscles—as in hypnotised subjects—by the assurance that the action to be performed by them may be executed with the greatest facility. This," Dr. Carpenter adds, "is quite conformable to ordinary experience—the assurance that we *can* perform some feat of strength or dexterity nerving us to the effort, whilst our power is weakened by our own doubts of success, still more by the unfavourable impression produced by a confident prediction of failure. It is only needed for the mind to be completely 'possessed'

by the one or the other conviction for it to produce the bodily results of this kind which I have over and over again witnessed."

Assurance of failure begets failure. I have heard of a young lady who from an imaginary injury was for many weeks totally unable to walk. One day, however, a gentleman in whose opinion she placed great confidence came and assured her with a positiveness which carried conviction to her mind that he was perfectly certain that she could walk if she tried. She believed him—and lo and behold, as if by a miracle—from that day forward walk she did! It was simply the mental assurance, the dominating and obstructing conviction that she could not walk, that had so petrified her previously. When that was removed she was a different person altogether.

The bearing of all this on extempore speaking is obvious. If a tyro is convinced that he will fail, fail he most surely will. It is sometimes said that no man knows what he can do until he tries. Trying to speak, however, will make no man a speaker if he tries with a conviction of his inability to speak. Assurance of failure will beget failure to a dead certainty; whereas, on the other hand, assurance of success goes far to bring about success.

There are, then, two contradictory beliefs or assurances which men may entertain with respect to their doing anything. The one paralyses, the other prompts to effort. Between these two contradictory poles of belief or assurance there is an intervening space of doubt. In proportion as a man's condition of mind, in the intervening space of doubt, is nearer to this pole of belief or that,

will he have, or not have, such confidence as he requires to put his efforts into action. Let him but be fully and convincingly assured that it is perfectly hopeless for him to attempt to speak, and, while he is so assured, hopeless it will certainly be. When, however, he begins to doubt this, and gets sufficiently near the opposite pole of belief to be able properly to put forth his energies and try, then—provided he has thoughts and words at his command, and consequently that his belief has a rational foundation—he will, in all likelihood, unless any physical impediment prevents him, speak with facility enough. At any rate let him make up his mind not to be daunted by a first failure. Confidence grows with experience, and so does the mastery over thoughts and words.

Men who have failed at first have often turned out the ablest speakers. Demosthenes, for instance, the prince of orators, was at first the feeblest of stammerers; Hall, the most eloquent of preachers, was dumbfounded at first for want of ideas; Cobden, the foremost and most successful of Anti-Corn-Law agitators, is said to have been so singularly embarrassed by nervous timidity when first he essayed to make an address at a public meeting in Manchester that he nearly broke down, and the chairman had actually to apologise to the audience for his lame attempt. After his maiden speech in the House of Commons he was contemptuously pronounced by Mr. Horace Twiss to be “only a barker.” Subsequently, however, his political opponents found him no mean antagonist. And lastly, Lord Beaconsfield, the chieftain of the Conservatives, when first he opened his mouth in

Parliament, was greeted on all sides with jeers of derision. Such examples might be multiplied by hundreds. The moral from them is obvious—

Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito.

CHAPTER XV.

PHYSICAL VIGOUR.

IF the cultivation of the mind is necessary with a view to influence, not less so is the preservation of PHYSICAL VIGOUR. This very palpable truth is far too frequently forgotten. Hence I would here emphasise the fact that no one who has a disordered body can possibly possess a thoroughly healthy mind.

The health of our minds—our powers of thinking, the very peculiarities of our temper and character, our being manly or effeminate, timid or bold—is connected with the states of our material organism. Even insanity itself, as every physician knows, is quite as much a bodily ailment as a mental. It is not, therefore, too much to say that a careless disregard of the conditions of our bodily health is not only foolish, but in high degree culpable and immoral.

What those conditions are any man—enough, at least, for his own every-day purposes—may, if he will, very easily discover for himself. Indeed, the preservation of our bodily health is far more a matter of plain common sense than of any minute physiological knowledge of digestion, assimilation, and the circulation of the blood. If it were not so the majority of mankind would be in an evil

case. No; it is not so much to our ignorance of the requirements of health, as to our want of attention to them, that the maladies we suffer from are owing. Indeed, instinct itself, in a very great degree, points out to men—and still more evidently to the lower animals—what they ought to do in order to be healthy. They should eat, they should drink, they should breathe pure air, they should exercise their bodies, they should recruit their energies by sufficient sleep. What more necessary to their physical well-being than that they should act thus? And what, usually, to animals in a wild state more thoroughly compulsory? To do what health requires is, in a similar way, partly *forced* even upon human beings. Nay, they could not so much as live except by acting as nature, to some extent, absolutely compels them.

Now, nature's guidance should be followed by human beings quite as much as it is followed by the lower animals, but with this difference—that it should be followed designedly. It is here, however, strange as it may seem, that men in a civilised condition most often fail. For example, well-to-do people of the world are not compelled by their circumstances—as some of their poorer fellow-men are, and as animals in a state of nature invariably are—to exercise their bodies, and hence it comes to pass that some of them take hardly any bodily exercise at all. In this they fall short of nature's requirements, and, of course, suffer accordingly. So, again, men equally suffer if in any respect they exceed nature's requirements, as, for instance, if they work beyond their strength, or eat more food than is good for them.

What more manifestly true than all this? And yet if we were to judge only from the practices of some very civilised people amongst us, we should almost be disposed to think the contrary. Thus students may be found who live as if they were in total ignorance of the invigorating and bracing influence which a due amount of brisk bodily exercise undoubtedly imparts to the mind. Gladstone's cleverness at college was all the brighter from his having been a first-rate oarsman, and his intellectual abilities since have been largely due to his fine physical powers developed by out-door exertions, and strengthened, to mention one characteristic particular, by the laborious art he excels in of felling trees with the dexterity of a professed woodcutter.* So with Xenophon and Julius Cæsar—they were no effeminate bookworms, but men who could take quite as active a part in the services of a campaign as in the domains of historical literature. Who, again, does not know that temperance is the rule of life to which all rational beings should conform—temperance in sleep, in food, in everything? And yet, even amongst the most civilised of men, how few are as temperate as they ought to be! To take only the case of food and drink, what numbers amongst us exceed the bounds of moderation!

WHAT TO EAT, DRINK, AND AVOID is a question upon which very different, very contradictory, and very extravagant opinions have been held. Some

* When, by permission of the Duke of Bedford, the Bedfordshire Natural History Society visited Woburn Abbey in 1879, a workman drew my notice to a large tree lying on the ground, which, he informed me, had been felled by Mr. Gladstone in twenty minutes!

say, If you would enjoy health you should never touch wine or beer. Others say, You should give up beef and mutton, and confine yourselves to a farinaceous diet. I agree with neither of them. I am fully alive, however, to the fact that, although vegetarians and teetotallers sometimes ride their hobbies a little too hard, they have been useful as social reformers. They have done much to check the vile habit of excessive drinking, and to some extent, too, have diminished the vice of gluttony. For this they are to be congratulated ; and if they have failed to prove that wine and beer are unmitigated poisons, and that a flesh-diet is invariably to be shunned, they have, at any rate, shown that they are by no means such absolute necessities of existence as some people seem to suppose.

Our golden rule should be temperance. Gormandising is loathsome, and so, still more, is drunkenness, filling our prisons with convicts, our poor-houses with paupers, and lunatic asylums with madmen ; destroying the health of tens of thousands of our countrymen, ruining their prosperity, marring their happiness, and consigning them to early graves. The fault, however, does not lie with the drink, but with the insensate drinkers. It would never make them drunk if they did not take too much of it. Its habitual employment, no doubt, is to be deprecated for some people, and its total discontinuance to be advised for others ; but to average men and women I feel as sure as I can feel of anything at all that from its strictly and intelligently temperate use no harm whatever can ensue. This, at any rate, accords with the testimony of my own

experience, and with opinions of eminent physicians.

But of the extreme danger of its abuse I have the most thorough conviction. Indeed, upon this point it would be impossible for any reasonable man to entertain a doubt, and, really, considering the enormous evils that arise from intemperate drinking, I cannot but feel that—whether we fully endorse their views or not—those philanthropists are deserving of our warmest gratitude who devote themselves to promoting its suppression.

As to the habit of SMOKING TOBACCO, I am persuaded that those who denounce it, like King James in his "Counterblaste," in terms of unqualified reprobation, might launch their invectives against many a worse thing. Experience has proved to the satisfaction of thousands that it possesses many valuable qualities—that it tends in numerous cases to soothe the nervous system, to allay the sense of hunger, and to retard the waste of tissue engendered by fatigue. Working men in general find it an immense boon, and few of them, I am sure, would willingly forego its enjoyment. Of course, when indulged in to excess, it is, like everything else, injurious; but, if a man uses it with due discretion, there is no valid reason why, if he likes it, he should give it up. I confess, nevertheless, to the conviction that a large and increasing number of young men in this country smoke a great deal too much, and thereby depress and impair their vital energies. The necessity of being rigorously temperate in the use of tobacco cannot be too strongly insisted on. Young men should be especially cautioned to indulge in

it with the utmost moderation, or they may do themselves irreparable mischief. Mere boys should not be permitted to smoke at all. Indeed, I have no doubt whatever that many a promising lad who has precociously adopted the habit of smoking has for the rest of his days suffered seriously from so doing.

But, allowing that smoking has something to be advanced on its behalf, it has also, to say the least of it, several very serious drawbacks. It taints the clothes, the furniture, and the breath—diffusing an odour which, fresh, is offensive to many, and when stale is disgusting to all. It is legitimately to be objected to if it makes a man a nuisance to his friends.

Hardly less necessary to the preservation of health than a proper supply of food and drink is an adequate amount of **BODILY EXERCISE**. No one, of course, will deny this. Indeed, it is so palpable a truism, that to some it may seem almost too obvious to name. And yet I do not see that it need be so regarded. Simple truths are the most wholesome truths, and unfortunately, too, are the very truths that in practice are most frequently forgotten. It is so in the case before us. No one, undoubtedly, is ignorant that if he would enjoy a healthy existence he must act so as to insure it. Still, for all that, where is the man to be found who thoroughly does so? Indeed, it is plain—to judge from the sedentary mode of life of large classes of well-to-do people amongst us—that, although the rule that bodily exercise is necessary for health is confessed by everybody, it is by no means a rule which in practice is universally observed. Hence results a direful crop of evils.

No law of our physical nature can we disregard with impunity, and few of us, I suspect, are more than half aware what an amount of wretchedness and chronic invalidism we may any one of us endure from setting at defiance this very simple but most peremptory condition of our sanitary well-being—the condition of bodily exercise. Men, to a great extent, may exist without it, no doubt—for habit inures them to almost anything—but we may rely upon it that, sooner or later, Nature will punish them if they do.

FRESH AIR is another immensely important factor of a man's healthy existence. Everybody knows it, of course, and yet how very few are at all times careful to secure it! Tell any man you please that he ought, if he wishes to be healthy, to breathe the air that is pure and unpolluted, and he will readily admit it. And yet that very same man will be content, day after day, and night after night, to occupy the close sitting-rooms and stuffy bedrooms of an ill-drained, badly-ventilated house, and to inhale an atmosphere bereft of much of its oxygen, and befouled by repeated use. What wonder if his spirits are depressed, and his vital energies feeble?

Then, again, that BODILY CLEANLINESS materially conduces to health most people will be inclined to allow. Indeed, it is proverbially described as next in importance to godliness. And yet I am disposed to think that if a great many people's godliness does not a good deal exceed their cleanliness the less said about their godliness the better.

The advantage to health of bodily ablution is of course obvious when we consider that the skin is perforated in all directions by innumerable micro-

scopic outlets, or pores, whose main function undoubtedly is to drain away noxious matter from the system. Stop up those pores, or impair the energy of the countless minute glands at their base, and bad effects will naturally ensue. A man's health depends much more on the condition of his epidermis than many suppose. Hence a high place amongst prophylactic agencies is to be accorded to that very simple but most invigorating of all tonics—the morning sponge-bath.

Just a word about SLEEP. Of course, every one knows that a sufficient amount of it is necessary for a man's health. Indeed, it may seem superfluous to some that I should think it worth while even so much as to mention so very obvious a truism. And yet really, considering how numbers amongst us pass their lives, one might almost suppose that a contradictory opinion prevailed. If, for example, we look abroad in the world, what do we see? Why, we find some people sleeping so much that they sleep themselves stupid, and we find others sleeping so little that we might verily imagine that it was their main endeavour to exist without sleeping at all. We see ball-goers converting night into day, and then afterwards dozing through the day as if they wanted to convert it into night—excusable perhaps as an exceptional proceeding, but, if occurring too frequently, noxious in the extreme. All excesses are injurious. People look for happiness from the excitement they derive from them, and, may be, for the moment get it:

But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade
With all the freaks of wanton wealth array'd—

In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain ;
And, e'en while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart, distrusting, asks if this be joy.

We see, again, luxurious idlers yawning out their dreamy lifetime, and regarding apparently both day and night as equally intended for inaction. And, lastly, we find infatuated students so bent upon their work, that they will keep themselves wide awake during the fittest hours for repose, and then afterwards will be unable to rest from nervous excitement. They are all playing a dangerous game, and dearly may they have to pay for it.

The states of men's bodies and the states of their minds are, as I observed at the outset, mutually dependent. No man can have a healthy mind with an unhealthy body, nor a healthy body with an unhealthy mind. It remains for me then now, before bringing this chapter to an end, just to add a few words about HEALTH OF MIND. I need scarcely say that it is a matter of the most vital moment, and that numbers of the miseries that mankind endure spring directly from the mind. Morbid conditions of the body affect the mind ; but those morbid conditions, far more frequently than some people think, are occasioned by mental causes—by depressing thoughts, and soul-depraving passions. Indeed, the influence of the mind over the body is very remarkable. A passing thought, by affecting the nervous ganglia which control the circulation, will bring into our faces the blush of shame, or the pallid hue of alarm. Ill news will paralyse our digestion, and pleasurable emotions will stimulate our hearts. Our bodily condition is most marvellously determined by our mental states,

and our mental states by our bodily condition. We cannot, therefore, be too careful to preserve our minds from all injurious perturbations. "Nothing," says Hufeland in his "Art of Prolonging Life"—"nothing tends with so much certainty to preserve life and health as cheerfulness and serenity of mind." And he is right. Never, therefore, let us brood over our troubles; never let us spend our time in vain regrets and idle forebodings. Life is too short to be so wasted. Let us never fret about the unalterable past, nor be over-anxious concerning the unknown future, but be up and doing in the living present on which all that is future hangs. *EX HOC MOMENTO PENDET ÆTERNITAS.*

I will resist the temptation of dwelling longer on this subject, and will merely say in conclusion, Let us keep health while we have got it, and never thoughtlessly trifle it away. With it a poor man is wealthy, but without it the richest man is poor indeed. Once gone, it may be gone for ever, and the remainder of our days be days of weariness. May such be the lot of none of us. At any rate, may it never occur to us through any reckless carelessness of our own, or assuredly we shall discover, when too late, how inestimable is the blessing we have squandered :—

For it so falls out
That what we have we prize not to the worth
Whiles we enjoy it; but being lack'd and lost,
Why then we reck the value; then we find
The virtue that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

WHATEVER influence in the world any individual person possesses depends, as has been shown, upon what he is in himself, and upon what his circumstances are; upon his wealth and social position on the one hand, and upon his intelligence, his culture, his eloquence, his moral qualities, his physical vigour, and so forth, on the other. All these things, therefore, may very properly be desired and sought after by those who would acquit themselves worthily on the stage of life. How to obtain them, so far as by human efforts they are obtainable, has, to some extent, been explained in the preceding pages.

It should never be forgotten, however, as has been already remarked, that although a man's influence depends greatly on his worldly circumstances, they are yet of very far less importance with a view to his exercising a good and noble influence—both in the social circle he belongs to, and beyond it—than what he is in himself. That is the main point. Hence the acquisition of worldly wealth should in all cases be subordinated to the preservation of moral integrity, apart from which the influence of wealth can only be an influence

for evil—in short, the very opposite influence to that for which it should be sought.

A noble influence by no means exclusively belongs to persons of wealth and eminence, but may be exerted by any man of noble character be he of what rank he may. Nobility of character is the prime essential, and that a poor man may possess as well as a rich one. Wealth and a high position, of course, increase the noble influence of a really noble man, but they increase also the ignoble influence of one who is base and ignoble. They are not worth getting or keeping at the expense of moral integrity. No, we want everywhere honest and sterling men. We want our noblemen, gentlemen, tradesmen, and workmen—in a word, all sorts and conditions of men amongst us—to have the courage to be genuine. We want men of all grades and classes to recognise more clearly than they do, while striving so eagerly after gain, of which they may obtain a little, and promotion which they may never get at all, that there is a higher object that they should aim at—namely, the object of being useful in their generation, and of exercising at all times such an influence as they can on the side of what is right and true. This is their divine vocation. Let them fulfil it manfully, and leave the issue to their God.

True success lies far more in having ably accomplished work than in having acquired either wealth or honours. Therefore, I would say to every aspirant after riches or reputation, Look well to duty. Be eager, whatever you undertake that is worth your devoting your serious efforts to at all, to do it to the best of your ability. If your endeavours are appreciated, you have a good reward; *but, if not, be not discouraged:*

Argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer
Right onward.

Your merits, if you happen to have any, will, in all probability, sooner or later be discerned. However, whether so or not, be ambitious of deserving glory rather than of obtaining it, and then you will preserve a clear conscience, and avoid many a chance of disappointment.

To estimate worldly success at its proper worth we should always, be it again repeated, look beyond it. It is valuable only, in a philanthropic point of view, for the greater influence it gives us, and the greater good it more easily enables us to do for our fellow-men. A man who thinks of worldly success first, and of rectitude next, will most likely miss the former through his defectiveness in the latter. On the other hand, a man who thinks of rectitude first, and of success next, whatever success he gains, he will have gained deservedly, and he wants it on no other terms.

Reputation dishonourably gotten is little likely to endure. But, even if it should endure, what is the worth of it? It may be sweet when fresh, but it very quickly turns sour. Reflection poisons it, and makes it nauseous. It brings no lasting satisfaction—nothing but empty and undeserved applause, of which surely a man's better self must feel most heartily ashamed. Hence Pope's manly apostrophe :—

Then teach me, Heaven, to scorn the guilty bays,
Drive from my breast that wretched lust of praise;
Unblemished let me live, or die unknown ;
Oh, grant an honest fame, or grant me none !

That was sound advice which, as reported by

Aulus Gellius, was once given by Musonius the philosopher to young men. "However much trouble," he said to them, "doing right costs you—do right. The trouble is transient, the pleasure is permanent. On the other hand, however much pleasure doing wrong affords you—don't do wrong. The pleasure of it is over in a trice, but the disgrace of it will be yours for ever."

And here I would suggest—and, trite though, of course, the suggestion is, it is none the less worthy of being pondered—that to keep men up to a high level of moral excellence, and to enable them to bear with fortitude the trials they meet with in life, there is nothing so helpful to them as an elevating religious faith, especially the firm and hope-inspiring conviction that under God's direction all things are being ordered well. Indeed, if we believe in God at all, as a Supreme Being who is worthy of our trust, this conclusion follows as a necessary consequence. He must be, as Christianity teaches, a God of love. People may talk as they please about the Unknown and Unknowable; but, after all, it is in positive belief alone that the mind of man can find content.

And the existence of God, we should remember, is no doubtful hypothesis, but an absolutely necessary assumption. Indeed, on no other possible theory can the universe, as we see it, be accounted for—a pretty sufficient evidence, so it seems to me, that the theory, so to call it, must be true. Indeed, the whole of Nature is full of divine activity. We behold it pulsating with life, operating with harmony, and subject to law. Nay, the very bricks in our houses keep their places because gravitation compels them. Cosmos prevails, and not Chaos;

order, not confusion. Surely, just as the activity of a human body is an evidence to our senses that it possesses life, so things visible and material, as they appear to us in Nature, are but outside manifestations of mystery within. They indicate that beneath Nature there must be something which is not Nature, something far more wonderful than even Nature itself, co-existing with it from all eternity, operating throughout it with amazing power, condensing mists into rain-drops, and nebulae into suns, controlling the movements of the tiniest atoms, and determining the mighty orbits of unnumbered worlds. In short, the first lesson which the sublime book of Nature teaches us is no other than this—the profoundest and most ennobling lesson which the wisest of the wise can learn, and yet so transparently plain as to be manifest as the sunlight to the simplest, written in shining characters on the firmament above us, and in hues innumerable on the earth beneath, a lesson the truth of which I can no more doubt than I can doubt my own existence—the great lesson, namely, of the being of a God.

Certainly, the great God of the universe has never been discernible to the eyes of mortal men. Ignorant and superstitious people in past ages have believed in perceptible gods, in visible gods, in gods in human shape appearing in assignable places. Such notions clearly were the products of their imagination. "No man hath seen God at any time," is a very ancient saying, and a very true one. Material things, as every man of science is aware, are the only things that are perceptible to man's bodily senses. But, although there is no God, nor anything but things material, apparent

to the organs of human vision; although we cannot perceive God by our external senses—see Him with our eyes, or hear Him with our ears—we can recognise Him by internal reflection. Indeed, from the stupendous wonders that Nature works, the only rational conclusion that can be drawn is—that there must be a God behind it. “The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament showeth His Handy-work” — this, though an old explanation, is a very good one, and mankind, I am satisfied, will never get a better. It is the only explanation that can fully meet the requirements of the case in point.

It is astonishing what silly arguments are sometimes advanced by glib declaimers. The following account was given me of a lecturer who had been censuring what he regarded as the folly of a belief in a God. The folly, however, was all in his own reasoning. He began by telling his hearers that there was no God. “And,” said he, “I will prove it. I call upon Him now, if He exists at all, to strike me dead in your presence; and I will give Him five minutes to do it in.” Upon this he pulled out his watch, held it out in his hand, and stood fixedly looking at it, amidst the breathless silence of the company. “One minute gone!” Then ensued another pause. “Two minutes!” He waited again. “Three minutes!” And so he went on till the time was completed. He then triumphantly boasted that he had demonstrated his thesis, when in reality he had not even so much as touched it. It is easy work to knock down a scarecrow. He set up a false god, and, when he had disposed of him, he thought he had demolished the true! As if, because the great God of the

universe was not so pettily vindictive as the speaker assumed, He therefore had no existence! When will mankind come to recognise, as they should, the ineffable grandeur and glory of the Supreme Being, and to understand, what devout students of science know well, that He never operates by fitful and capricious impulses, as superstition has supposed, but by laws which never deviate by a hair's breadth from their regular and determined course, guiding the vast orbs of heaven in their stupendous revolutions, and painting the tiny flowers which bloom unnoticed in the fields?

But, "if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Such was the thought which was full of comfort once to Mungo Park. The story, of course, has been frequently told; but I will venture here to tell it once again. He was travelling footsore and weary in the wilds of Africa, and was just about to resign himself to despair and inevitable death, when, chancing to glance down upon the ground, he caught sight of a little moss-plant. It was so minute that the whole of it was no larger than the top of one of his fingers. But it suggested hope to him, and cleared his mind of despondency. Indeed, it proved the salvation of his life. Can that Being, he meditated to himself, as he recognised its peculiar beauty, and contemplated the delicate conformation of its roots and leaves—can that Being who planted, watered, and brought to perfection in this arid soil a thing so insignificant as this, be indifferent to the welfare of men? Surely it cannot be. The thought encouraged him, and he went on his way rejoicing.

"I started up," he says, "and, disregarding both hunger and fatigue, travelled forwards assured that relief was at hand, and—I was not disappointed."

Now every botanist, of course, knows, far better than this African traveller did, how elaborate is the structure of even the very humblest vegetable. Like him, let him reflect upon his knowledge; let him meditate upon what he sees, and he will find a meaning in it which he would not otherwise discover.

The advantage of reflecting upon what we see, even in the case of the very commonest of natural objects, is sometimes brought home to our minds by striking incidents. I remember reading some time ago in a periodical a story which was described as true of a sailor who having continually noticed a certain sea-plant growing just at or above the line of the highest tide-mark, and rarely, or never, below it, turned this very simple observation to good practical account in a time of emergency. During a tempestuous night he was shipwrecked, and was clambering with difficulty up a rugged rock to escape destruction from the waves, when, as bad luck would have it, an overhanging boulder blocked his further way. What to do he knew not. To ascend higher was impossible, and to descend in the darkness would have been certain death. Possessed with alarm lest as the tide rose it would engulf him, he was giving himself up for lost, when, feeling about on the ledge he was standing upon, he touched with his hand one of these high-water sea-plants, just moistened with the spray of the receding tide. Reflection brought home to him its meaning at once. It was as if an

angel from Heaven had been sent to cheer him. The thought flashed into his mind that he was above the tide-mark, and that the billows could do him no further harm. He patiently waited for the morning's dawn, and was finally rescued from his peril.

So surely to be relied upon are the laws of Nature of which we avail ourselves in our calculations from day to day. "The waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly, but yet the Lord who dwelleth on high is mightier. He hath set their bounds which they cannot pass." A child, therefore, may mock the efforts of the ocean to overleap its tether. Sporting on the sea-shore, and running backwards and forwards as the breakers come towards him and recoil, he may playfully say to them, "Catch me if you can, for I am not afraid of you. Your roaring is very loud, but I don't mind you, and can scamper out of your way if I will." So completely under the control of an invisible Power is the ever-moving main; so obedient to the command which checks it—"Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

No one, of course, is more conscious than a botanist how marvellous is the structure of many an insignificant plant. It engages his interest, and evokes his utmost admiration. But it should do more than this. It should bring home to his mind the certain conviction that every plant, every flower—yea, every mean and minute weed—is as much a production of intelligence as is any work of the skill and ingenuity of man. I may be told, perhaps, that a plant is what it is in consequence of the operation of the laws of Nature; that those

laws act blindly, and that the notion of their being guided by intelligence is a mere illusion. I appeal to any enlightened botanist, and ask if he can possibly believe it. I am perfectly ready to admit that plants are produced by the laws of Nature—and so are all things, for the matter of that—but that the laws of Nature which produce them act blindly, and without being directed by intelligence, in the face of the amazing proofs to the contrary that Nature everywhere affords, is an opinion for which I can see no adequate foundation. I am persuaded that it would be as reasonable to imagine that an exquisitely constructed chronometer was made by a blind and drivelling idiot as that such a thing of symmetry and beauty as is many a common plant or wayside flower could have been produced by laws which had no intelligence behind them. Indeed, the very idea of law contradicts such an assumption. Absolute lawlessness, if such a thing existed in the realms of Nature, might be devoid of intelligent control; but law implies regulation—the operation of a dominating mind. How imperfect, moreover, are the works of man when seen beside the works of Nature! If the former tell of intelligence, much more, surely, do the latter.

That every plant, every flower, every mean weed, is as manifestly the result of intelligence as any ingenious work of man can be, cannot reasonably be doubted. It is, however, more than this; for not only is it a result of intelligence, but it actually displays intelligence in its own movements. Yes; in every living plant a living intelligence is discernible—an intelligence that energises in every filament of its texture, controls

its mode of growth, directs downwards into suitable soil the delicate fibres of its roots, and expands its leaves upwards to inhale elements of nutrition from the air. Every cottager knows how a strawberry-runner in his garden will fix itself in the exact spot of earth that is best fitted for it to thrive on, how a geranium in his sitting-room will turn towards the daylight, and how a potato-tuber in his out-house will send out its long string-like sprouts towards a chink in the adjoining wall. Such movements, surely, are indicative of intelligence—not, of course, of any intelligence belonging to the plants, but, nevertheless, of a living intelligence determining their living action. Similarly, in the animal world, when a spider constructs its elaborate web, a bird its nest, or a bee its honeycomb, it does so by an intelligence which is clearly no intelligence of its own. I may be told, perhaps, that the case of the sprout of a potato-tuber stretching towards a chink in the wall is a simple instance of the attractive power of light, and needs no hypothesis of intelligence to account for it. Of course, no one can suppose that a potato-tuber is an intelligent thing, though certainly, by stretching out its long sprouts towards the light, it comports itself just as if it were. Under the circumstances it is placed in it could not possibly do anything better towards promoting its growth and welfare. It acts apparently from intelligence. And so with bees, and spiders, and birds. If they were professional architects, they could hardly build their homes more ingeniously. That a potato-tuber or a geranium turns towards the light because the light attracts it is some explanation of the movement, no doubt, but none whatever of its apparent

intelligence. The inquiry still remains, What originated and maintains throughout the whole vast system of Nature movements of the most astonishing abundance and complexity that are seemingly the outcome of intelligence? What guides the orbs of heaven? What keeps every atom in its place? Gravitation and attraction shall we say? No; one, and one only, sufficient answer can be given to the question, and that is—INTELLIGENCE ITSELF.

Indeed, intelligence is to be discerned operating unconsciously — unconsciously to the thing that reveals it—in every living plant, in every living animal, yea, and in every inanimate object. The revolutions of the stars are controlled by it, and so also are the movements of a grain of sand. In short, a living intelligence is to be recognised everywhere, and nowhere perhaps more strikingly than in the domain of vegetation.

Mankind, in all ages, have felt the spiritual influence of natural phenomena. It was so with the Hebrew psalmist of old time when he exclaimed, as he contemplated the midnight firmament: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handy work." It was so with the philosopher Kant, who confessed, as he looked upwards at the star-spangled sky, that the vision filled him with emotion. It was so with the essayist Addison, to whose spirit the stars, as they twinkled with silvery brightness in the profound stillness of eternal space, seemed almost to speak out audibly:—

For ever singing, as they shine,
The hand that made us is divine.

And it was so with the first Napoleon, of whom

we are told by Madame de Rémusat that he would be thrown into raptures by the murmur of the wind, and would talk with enthusiasm of the moaning of the sea. Such sounds appealed to his soul with a significance which he felt. And so, likewise, with sublime scenery—it awes the mind into solemnity. Thus it was with Miss Bird, who, in her “Life in the Rocky Mountains,” describes the effect which a splendid sunrise had upon her when she was ascending Long’s Peak, in the very heart of the Rocky range. Her guide on the occasion, “a notorious desperado, a red-handed man,” was so impressed by the glory of the spectacle that, as if actuated by an uncontrollable impulse, he reverently uncovered his head, involuntarily ejaculating, as he did so, “I believe there is a God!” As for Miss Bird herself, she was almost prompted, Parsee-like, to fall down on her knees and worship! Thus vividly at times do we realise a divine presence in the things of Nature, and are driven spontaneously to adore. It is so with all men, from the greatest to the least.

Lo! the poor Indian, whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds, and hears Him in the wind,

is devotional by innate instinct. And so, indeed, is every man more or less. Even in the most extreme and inveterate sceptic, little as he may think it, the religious tendency or impulse within him is often perceptibly predominant. He gazes on some landscape of splendour, and is spell-bound with admiration. Why? Because there is Something in it that affects him. What is that Something? It is the Soul of Nature finding a response from his soul within. Yes, he worships! His admira-

tion amounts to worship, and nothing less, yea, to worship of the sincerest kind—the worship of his inmost spirit. Does he, then, worship matter as a savage worships a stone? Does he make the visible universe an object of idolatry? He would deprecate the absurdity of such an imputation. What, then, does he worship? Why, in sober truth, strange as it may sound to say so, he is an unconscious worshipper of God. He actually worships the Deity whose existence he denies! Thus our atheists and agnostics may be more religious than they fancy. They

Adore and worship when they know it not,
Pious beyond the intention of their thoughts,
Devout above the meaning of their will.

In the inmost sanctuary of their hearts there is an altar to the God they know not. Whom they unwittingly worship Him declare we unto them.

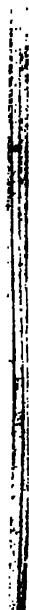
And we may declare of Him that He is supremely good. How so, it may be asked, when He permits the existence of evil? True; but could there be good without it? It is certainly a principle that belongs to the very constitution of things. The advancement of mankind, and of the whole animated creation, has been brought about by means of it. Sufficient weight has hardly been given to this very noteworthy consideration; for if good results from evil—and most surely it does—then clearly there is not only intelligence, but a beneficent intelligence, operating throughout the mechanism of the world. In short, we may be fully and undoubtedly assured of the ineffable goodness of the Supreme Being, and that, if we live up to the light we have, we need fear no evils either

here or hereafter. If we do our duty manfully, and leave all consequences to His ordering, we may confidently rely on His eternal protection. There is, I fondly believe, a better future awaiting virtuous souls than ever saint has dreamt of; a better "life to come"—noble though her aspirations were—than was ever contemplated by George Eliot when she penned those grand but simple lines, familiar to many as household words:—

Oh, may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence; live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge men's search
To vaster issues.

Nitamur semper ad optima.





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